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ARMS CONTROL AND BRITISH AND FRENCH
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by

Mary J. Schroeder

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Arms Control and British and French Nuclear Forces

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requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

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I. INTRODUCTION

On September 18, 1987, President Reagan announced that the United States and the Soviet Union had reached a tentative agreement on the limitation of intermediate range nuclear forces (INF) in Europe. Conspicuously absent from the terms of the agreement was a Soviet demand for compensation from the U.S. for British and French nuclear forces.

Such compensation had been raised as an obstacle to agreement from time to time in the past. Ever since the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I) began in 1969, a Soviet objective in virtually all U.S.-Soviet arms control negotiations has been to obtain either explicit or implicit allowances for the existence of our European allies' independent nuclear deterrents, and in the INF talks the Soviets had been especially adamant. But, on February 28, 1987 Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev abruptly agreed to drop the link between an INF agreement and third-party nuclear forces.[1]

This raises a key question and one which provides the rationale for this thesis. In light of the new Soviet negotiating position regarding our allies' nuclear systems in an INF agreement, and given their consistent preoccupation with this issue throughout prior U.S.-Soviet arms control negotiations, why has the matter been dropped, or has it merely been postponed? If this insistence is likely to surface again in another negotiation, it is important to understand the history of the problem, the capabilities and employment doctrine of the forces in question, and the possible impact inclusion of such forces in an agreement could have on Alliance security. Therefore this thesis examines the role of British and French nuclear weapons in arms control. Although the focus will be on the compensation claims advanced by the Soviets in U.S.-Soviet bilateral negotiations, the possibility of separate Soviet negotiations with each country will also be considered.

In the post-World War II period, NATO has been faced with an ever increasing Soviet threat, both in terms of conventional superiority and now, in the late 1980's, certain important nuclear advantages. Given their proximity to the Soviet Union, the West Europeans have been more immediately threatened by Soviet military power.

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[1]The Gorbachev proposal was to de-link agreement on INF from unsettled issues like strategic offensive and defensive weapons and British and French nuclear forces. Bill Keller, "Moscow, in Reversal, Urges Agreement 'Without Delay' to Limit Missiles in Europe," *The New York Times*, March 1, 1987, p. 1.

Lawrence Freedman delineates three choices for the Europeans in the face of the Soviet nuclear presence:

- accede to it and accept Soviet influence;
- counter it with an independent national capacity for nuclear retaliation;
- or depend on the deterrent of another nuclear power.[2]

Whereas the other West European nations have chosen the latter course, the British and French have opted to develop independent nuclear arsenals, to supplement the nuclear guarantees provided by the United States.

For the French, this decision stemmed from the belief that France could not depend on the U.S. as the nuclear guarantor of French security. Many French leaders shared the view principally associated with General De Gaulle, that the United States would not jeopardize its own national territory to retaliate for Soviet aggression against France. French leaders since the 1950s have argued that the only credible deterrent is one provided by a nation which feels its own vital interests to be threatened. As a result, France has resolutely sought to maintain the independence of its nuclear forces. This was reflected in its withdrawal from the integrated military structure of NATO in 1966.

Since 1959, following the amendment of the McMahon Act of 1946[3] which had prohibited nuclear cooperation with other countries, the "special relationship" between the United States and Great Britain has extended to the field of nuclear weaponry. The "special relationship" as the term implies, refers to the political, historical, cultural, and ideological ties that bind the U.S. and Great Britain and which have resulted in close cooperation between the two countries. This relationship was, in a certain sense, codified with the Anglo-American agreement for Cooperation on the Uses of Atomic Energy for Mutual Defense Purposes,[4] and its subsequent amendment in 1959 placing Britain in a special position regarding nuclear weapons cooperation. The first British nuclear device was created independently of the United States, allowing the development of the Royal Air Force V-bomber as the backbone of the British strategic deterrent. The development of intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) and Soviet

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[2]Freedman, Lawrence, "U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe: Symbols, Strategy, and Force Structure," in *Nuclear Weapons in Europe*, edited by Andrew J. Pierre, New York University Press, 1984, p. 52.

[3]Atomic Energy Act of 1946, 42 U.S.C. sec 2011(1946).

[4]Agreement for Cooperation on the Uses of Atomic Energy for Mutual Defense Purposes, August 4, 1958, United States-United Kingdom, 19 U.S.T. 1028, T.I.A.S. No. 4078.

testing of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) however, contributed to the obsolescence of the V-bomber as a delivery system. With the cancellation of the British land-based strategic missile, Blue Streak in 1960, Great Britain admitted its inability to compete in a strategic arms race with the superpowers and started its reliance on American hardware as the base on which to build its deterrent.

Because the Soviets seem to doubt that Great Britain would do anything to jeopardize the "special relationship", or that they could act contrary to American desires, the "special relationship" may help contribute to a Soviet belief that the British nuclear arsenal cannot be independent. Unlike the French, the British have cast no doubt on the American nuclear guarantee. On the contrary, the British borrowed the French concept of a "second nuclear decision center" as justification for their independent deterrent, in order to avoid the appearance of skepticism regarding American promises of deterrence.[5] Great Britain's development of an independent nuclear arsenal has been couched mainly in terms of enhancing alliance security and reserving the right to use its forces in defense of its own supreme national interests, if necessary.

The debate within the Alliance on the role of British and French nuclear weapons in arms control negotiations has sharpened over the past several years. It has taken several forms; from demands that there be a taking-account of these weapons, to direct participation of the U.K. and France in multilateral negotiations, to Soviet negotiations separately with both of these nations. In the United States alone, the debate is especially lively with arguments being made both for and against. Political analysts from all parts of the spectrum have voiced concern about this issue. Support for their inclusion in the process is justified by liberals and conservatives alike, using arguments such as:

- precipitate use of nuclear weapons by either France or Great Britain could involve the U.S. unwillingly in a nuclear confrontation;

[5]The concept of alternate decision making centers as a rationale for independent deterrent capabilities argues that by having more than one alliance government with a nuclear capability at its disposal, an aggressor is even more uncertain to how aggression might be met. Many Europeans believe strongly in the value of uncertainty for enhancing deterrence. See generally, Robbin Laird, *The Soviet Union, The West, and the Nuclear Arms Race*, New York University Press, 1986, p. 155.

- after modernization is complete, British and French forces can no longer be aptly described as too insignificant to make a difference; and
- allowing participation and consultation with our allies can lead to a stronger alliance.[6]

On the other hand, there are just as many who believe that the Soviets should not be compensated for these forces. Some supporters of the British and French deterrents say the U.K. and France do us a favor by relieving us of the political burden of being the only NATO country with nuclear weapons and they add credibility to nuclear deterrence overall.[7] This debate is further evidence of a recognition in the United States dating back to the 1974 Ottawa Declaration, that France and Great Britain do have a valid deterrent role to play and that their strategic doctrine and arms control policies can more than marginally affect the NATO-Warsaw Pact balance of power.[8]

If the attention Moscow has given this issue over the years is any indication, the Soviet Union has always recognized that the arsenals of France and Great Britain are an important element in the East-West relationship. The general Soviet contention seems to be that, while nominally independent, the strategic systems of France and Great Britain are in actuality, part of the West's deterrent posture. Therefore, although the tactics sometimes change, the objective remains that of assuring "equal security" for the Soviet Union against the combined NATO threat.[9]

The question of what role, if any, French and British nuclear forces should play in arms control is complicated. While this thesis cannot to provide a definitive answer, it attempts to clarify some of the basic components of the debate. Chapter Two examines the capabilities of the British and French nuclear forces and their strategic doctrine. It also discusses the policies of their governments regarding participation in arms control.

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[6]For a sampling of some of the currents of thought on this issue, see the following: John Prados, Joel S. Wit, and Michael J. Zagurek, Jr., "The Strategic Nuclear Forces of Britain and France," *Scientific American*, vol. 255, August 1986; George Seignious and Jonathan P. Yates, "Europe's Nuclear Superpowers," *Foreign Policy*, Summer 1984; and James M. Schlick, *Independent Nuclear Powers and U.S. Deterrence*, Naval War College, June 1982.

[7]Ibid.

[8]North Atlantic Council, "Ottawa Declaration on Atlantic Relations," adopted by the ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council, June 19, 1974, *U.S. Department of State Bulletin*, July 8, 1974.

[9]The Soviet "equal security" concept is discussed in Chapter IV.

In Chapter Three, the historical development of British and French nuclear arms as an issue in U.S.-Soviet arms control negotiations is examined, beginning with SALT I in 1969, continuing through SALT II, and concluding with the INF negotiations and the ongoing Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START).

Chapter Four analyzes Soviet arms control aims *vis-à-vis* French and British forces and their methods for achieving those objectives. U.S. policy formulations regarding allied independent nuclear arsenals, including some of the various arguments, pro and con, are discussed. The potential implications for Western security and Alliance cohesion of Soviet demands for the inclusion of British and French forces U.S.-Soviet arms control negotiations are examined. Conclusions and findings are summarized in Chapter Five.

II. BRITISH AND FRENCH CAPABILITIES AND POLICIES

While France and Great Britain both have an independent nuclear capability, their arsenals are different in nature. The British nuclear deterrent is largely dependent on its submarine launched ballistic missile (SLBM) force. The French, on the other hand, have developed a strategic triad comparable to that of the United States, although their force depends to a greater extent on their SLBMs.

With needed modernization being undertaken, the 1990s are likely to be crucial for the governments of Great Britain and France. Due to both qualitative and quantative improvements, the capabilities of Great Britain and France will significantly increase in the next ten years. Many proponents of French and British participation in arms control negotiations point to this as the prime reason for inclusion of these forces in the negotiating process. Although numerically and qualitatively, these forces will not compare with American or Soviet forces, there will be a "quantum leap" in comparison to their previous capabilities.

France especially has moved forward with a singleness of purpose to ensure the credibility of its deterrent forces. However, despite modernization plans, neither Great Britain nor France harbors the illusion that it can threaten the Soviet Union alone. The French concept is one of the weak deterring the strong, although Robbin Laird points out that perhaps more realistically, it should be described as "the strong deterred by the strong, augmented by the weak."[10]

The underlying concept of both the French and British nuclear arsenals is that, whether or not the American deterrent is credible for their defense, an independent nuclear deterrent of their own is more credible than the guarantee provided by another. The French and the British have indicated that, if they were confronted with a nuclear attack on their national territory, they would respond with a retaliatory attack by their strategic forces. The French have stated repeatedly, as President Valery Giscard d'Estaing pointed out in 1980, that " . . . any nuclear attack on France's soil would automatically provoke strategic nuclear retaliation."[11]

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[10]Robbin Laird, *The Soviet Union, The West, and the Nuclear Arms Race*, p. 113.

[11]Giscard d'Estaing in *Le Monde* (Paris), June 28, 1980 cited in David S. Yost, "French Nuclear Targeting," in *Strategic Nuclear Targeting*, edited by Desmond Ball, and Jeffrey Richelson, Cornell University Press, 1986, p. 150.

Since the modernization effort in both countries has not been completed, both current forces and planned force improvements are described. In light of the improved capabilities force modernization will provide, and the fears in some circles concerning these abilities, this chapter also studies the force employment doctrines of the French and British governments. Finally, given the importance of the overall question of the role of British and French nuclear weapons in arms control, the arms control policies of both governments are examined.

A. BRITISH NUCLEAR SYSTEMS AND EMPLOYMENT DOCTRINE

The British nuclear debate has been rather unique in that it has centered on the question of retention or abdication of an independent deterrent capability, rather than on the creation or improvement of one. Britain's nuclear weapons program, established by Prime Minister Clement Attlee, matured under secretive conditions. In 1952, the country was presented with a *fait accompli* and the subsequent debate became one of whether or not Great Britain should remain a nuclear power.[12] Whereas in the United States, nuclear weapons a the source of controversy mainly because of their destructive military potential, in Great Britain the controversy focuses instead on economic costs. As long as Britain was able to maintain cost-effective nuclear forces, the nuclear deterrent was in little jeopardy. Since the British government's decision to replace its aging nuclear ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) force with the costly American-made Trident II D-5, its strategic nuclear forces have been endangered by the ensuing domestic debate.[13] If the British government is able to bring the planned modernization to fruition, it will result in a substantial quantitative increase in British nuclear capabilities, from 128 strategic nuclear warheads to 512 warheads in the 1990s.[14]

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[12]Peter Malone, *The British Nuclear Deterrent*, Croom Helm, 1984, p.27.

[13]Lawrence Freedman, "The Role of Third-Country Nuclear Forces," in *The Nuclear Confrontation in Europe*, edited by Jeffrey D. Boutwell, Paul Doty, and Gregory F. Treverton, Croom Helm, 1985, p. 121.

[14]The number 512 reflects the total number of strategic warheads on four SSBNs (with each missile having 8 MIRVs). Since it likely that at most three SSBNs will be on station at once, 384 warheads would be available at a given time. See, Lawrence Freedman, "British Nuclear Targeting," in *Strategic Nuclear Targeting*, edited by Desmond Ball, and Jeffrey Richelson, Cornell University Press, 1986, pp. 123-124.

1. **British Nuclear Capabilities**

Until force modernization is concluded, British nuclear capabilities will remain rather modest. The British strategic force consists of four *Resolution-class* SSBNs with 16 Polaris A-3 missiles each. Until 1982, the A-3 SLBMs deployed on British ballistic missile submarines had three warheads of 200 kilotons yield each delivered by a multiple reentry vehicle (MRV) system. However, in 1982, due to concerns about the Soviet ABM system deployed around Moscow, the A-3s were retrofitted with warheads of British design. The Chevaline warheads, specifically designed to alleviate these concerns, have increased BMD penetration capability, and are equipped with two MRVed warheads, each having a yield of only 40 kilotons.[15] The improvement, however, did not eliminate the requirement for a Polaris replacement when the SSBN would have to be scrapped in the 1990s.

The Trident II D-5, when it is deployed, will replace Polaris. Plans are for the construction of four new Trident SSBNs. Sources vary as to how many multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs) Trident II can carry, but it is somewhere between eight and fourteen.[16] The British government however does not intend to MIRV the Trident II to its full capacity.[17] Even so, after modernization the

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[15]Robbin Laird, *The Soviet Union, the West, and the Nuclear Arms Race*, p. 141

[16]Robbin Laird in *The Future of the British Strategic Nuclear Force*, Center for Naval Analysis, CRM 86-121, May 1986, on page 4, states the D-5 can carry 14 MIRVs, but Gil Klinger in his Rand Corporation Study, *Strategic Nuclear Weapons, Arms Control, and the NATO Alliance*, P-7128, on page 10, cites government sources as saying it will carry 8 warheads.

[17]The British government denied any desire to increase its nuclear warheads, stating Trident II was chosen strictly because of its cost-effectiveness and to be on a schedule approximating that of the U.S. Navy. Although the D-5 missile is capable of carrying more warheads than the originally scheduled C-4 missile (up to fourteen), the British government has publicly stated its intent not to deploy more than the eight warhead C-4 capacity. However, it has also intimated that it might review this policy, depending on Soviet BMD developments. A 1987 defense white paper indicates that an increase in Soviet ballistic missile defense capabilities could justify an increased number of warheads. However, the white paper says that Trident will be deployed "with the minimum number of warheads" necessary to hold key aspects of Soviet power at risk. Great Britain, Secretary of State for Defence, *Statement on the Defence Estimates, 1987*, cited in David Yost, *Soviet Ballistic Missile Defense and the Western Alliance*, unpublished manuscript, 1987, p. 278.

British strategic nuclear deterrent will consist of four SSBNs, each capable of firing sixteen Trident II D-5 missiles with up to fourteen MIRVs each; a substantial increase and one which has some arms controllers calling for the British to participate in negotiations.

One of the more important factors leading to the Trident selection as a Polaris replacement was the continued need for survivable forces to enhance British nuclear credibility and to permit implementation of the British force employment doctrine. Without forces capable of surviving a Soviet first strike, British strategic doctrine would be ineffective.

In addition to the British SSBN force, the U.K. deploys the Tornado strike aircraft--a joint Italian-German-British project--in the FRG, with about 80 British WE-177 tactical nuclear bombs. The maximum yield of these weapons is 200 kt each. The Tornado has a combat radius roughly equivalent to that of the French Mirage IV (1,300 km) and can also be refueled in flight. The British also have about 60 of the older Buccaneer, a nuclear capable aircraft with a range of 1,700 km and 36 Jaguar A, with a 1,400 km range.[18]

2. **Force Employment Doctrine**

Unfortunately, it is not always easy to ascertain Britain's force employment doctrine because of the government's reluctance to publicly discuss British strategy or engage in theoretical analysis[19] According to the 1962 Nassau Agreement in which the United States agreed to sell Great Britain the Polaris system, their doctrine seems clear.[20] British nuclear forces are assigned to NATO roles and "are targeted in accordance with NATO plans." However, the rule does not apply when British "supreme national interests" are felt to be threatened. Apparently, under British doctrine strategic forces may serve several purposes:

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[18]Eric J. Grove, "Allied Nuclear Forces Complicate Negotiations," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist*, June-July 1986, p. 20.

[19]Robin Ranger, speech at the Conference of the International Studies Association, Philadelphia, March 1981, cited in Kevin Cummings, *The New British Deterrent, p. 13.*

[20]"United States-Great Britain Joint communique, Statement on Nuclear Defense Systems," December 21, 1962, *U.S. Department of State Bulletin*, no. 1229, January 14, 1963.

- to fulfill a NATO role, in part by adding to the West's forces facing the Soviet Union;
- to provide an additional center of decision-making;
- to offer a "last resort" defense of British territory;
- to provide a more credible deterrent to Soviet eyes;
- to provide strategic nuclear options un an uncertain future.[21]

There is some evidence to suggest that, until Britain's forces are modernized, the NATO role would be somewhat difficult to fill since the limited number of warheads permits little flexibility in targeting.[22] Perhaps more important to NATO would be, not making limited strikes on Soviet targets, but maintaining her own territory as sanctuary, thus permitting an American base near the area of battle.[23]

While public policy declarations maintain that British forces are assigned to NATO, Lawrence Freedman says that privately one cannot be too sure. There is public support in Great Britain for an independent nuclear deterrent, but only if that deterrent is used in the defense of British territory.[24] Says Freedman, "it is almost impossible to find a statement by a senior British politician out of office that assumes that the purpose of the national force is anything other than a 'last resort' deterrent for Britain." Freedman goes on to say that even those in office have begun to call the British nuclear forces the "ultimate guarantor of our national security."[25]

Although British targets are allocated by the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff (JSTPS) at the Strategic Air Command,[26] the British themselves have a different set of targets if they choose to exercise their independent nuclear option. Winston Churchill recognized in 1955 that there might come a time when NATO targeting might not be exactly what Great Britain would desire. If Great Britain depended on

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[21]Some of these roles are similar to those perceived by France. See David Yost, "French Nuclear Targeting," p. 154.

[22]Lawrence Freedman, "British Nuclear Targeting," p. 123.

[23]Ibid., p. 126.

[24]Robbin Laird, *The Soviet Union, the West, and the Nuclear Arms Race*, p. 150.

[25]Lawrence Freedman, "U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe: Symbols, Strategy and Force Structure," p. 53.

[26]Lawrence Freedman, "British Nuclear Targeting," p. 119.

the "resources of another country," according to Churchill, targets which the British government considered "a matter of life and death" might not be given the priority they deemed appropriate. For that reason the British had to be able to make a "contribution of our own."[27]

Historically, British targeting has concentrated on countervalue targets (cities). Targeting cities dates back to the Royal Air Force Bomber Command's targeting plans in World War II. The British believe, as do the French, that by threatening massive retaliation against Soviet cities they can deter a Soviet attack.[28] In fact, Michael Quinlan, Deputy Under Secretary of State in the Ministry of Defence, implied in 1980-81 that Moscow was a key target when he stated ". . . that Governments did not want to have a situation where the adversary could have a sanctuary for his capital and a large area around it."[29] However, the introduction into British nuclear forces of the Trident II will enable Great Britain to strike Soviet hard targets. Although this system is effective against at least some categories of counterforce targets, it appears that the U.K. is more interested in its survivability as a second strike weapon than in its capability to take out Soviet military installations. Although targeting is different, whatever the mission, allied or independent, British forces would be targeted on Soviet territory.

Since the Soviets can expect British nuclear weapons to be aimed at Soviet territory, whether acting alone or in concert with NATO, this may strengthen British credibility. Although the British have never openly doubted the U.S. guarantee, their 1980 White Paper stresses that it is Soviet perceptions not European ones which necessitate an independent British deterrent.[30] The rationale is that whatever the British might think about the U.S. nuclear guarantee, the Soviets might find a British threat of retaliation for an attack against British territory more credible than an American one.

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[27]Winston Churchill, *Hansard* (*House of Commons*), vol. 537, March 1, 1955, cited in Freedman, "British Nuclear Targeting," p. 113.

[28]It is interesting that it was the British, who in their Global Strategy Paper in 1952 developed what later was adopted in the United States as "the New Look" or the doctrine of massive retaliation.

[29]*Strategic Nuclear Weapons*, Fourth Report from the Defence Committee, 1980-81, cited in Freedman, "British Nuclear Targeting," p. 123.

[30]Secretary of State for Defence, *Statement on Defence Estimates, 1980*, p. 12.

3. Arms Control Policy

The British government's position concerning arms control is quite clear. The British government notes that, contrary to Soviet claims, its strategic forces are independent and not subject to American orders for launch; nor is the British strategic deterrent meant to defend all of NATO.[31] According to Roy Dean, a former official of the British Foreign and and Commonwealth Office, the United Kingdom "has never pretended, nor have the allies accepted that the U.K. deterrent can offer extended deterrence."[32] Therefore, the British government maintains, it is inconceivable to include British forces with U.S. weapons ceilings. Although the Labour party and the Liberals favor unilateral disarmament, the Conservative party of Prime Minister Thatcher is adamantly opposed to such a step. In contrast to the most insistent Soviet demands for inclusion of British and French forces in INF limitations, the British have long affirmed that their nuclear weapons are strategic in nature and are excluded from the INF talks as a result of the definition of "strategic" which the Soviets agreed to in SALT II (that is, weapons with a range of greater than 5,500 km), and which was reflected in the Soviet draft of the INF treaty.[33] Roy Dean, a former official of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, says that the Soviets implicity recognized the equivalence of British sea-based forces to American and Soviet SSBNs in their unilateral statement to the SALT I agreement.[34] The British can also defend this exclusion as NATO policy. In the NATO Integrated Decision Document of December 12, 1979, the Alliance Ministers specifically said, ". . . arms control negotiations involving INF should not include non-U.S. Allied systems nor should the U.S. negotiate with the Russians compensation for such systems."[35]

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[31]Although Britain agreed in the Nassau Agreement, as already noted, to use its forces in accordance with NATO plans and for NATO roles, the agreement does not refer to the British nuclear forces as a defense for NATO as a whole , nor does it make British nuclear forces subject to American orders for launch. The phrase "supreme national interests" is ambuiguous enough to give the British leeway in determining when national interests are at stake.

[32]Roy Dean, "The British Nuclear Deterrent and Arms Control," *The World Today*, September 1983, p. 320.

[33]Ibid., p. 319. See Chapter IV of this thesis for a discussion of the Soviet definition of "strategic."

[34]Ibid., p. 320. In this statement the Soviets claimed a right to increase their SSBNs if the French or British increased theirs. The U.S. however, refused to accept the validity of the Soviet claim.

[35]Ibid., p. 319.

While the government of the United Kingdom vehemently refuses to include its strategic nuclear weapons in negotiations on intermediate range forces, it does not exclude the possibility of their relevance to other arms control fora.[36] Margaret Thatcher has said that if a time came when the U.S. and the Soviet Union massively reduced their nuclear weapons and ". . . we moved into a totally different world . . . then there may be circumstances when ours will have to be counted [in arms negotiations]."[37] The British, however, have set definite conditions for their participation. First, the superpowers must take bilateral steps toward arms control; second, there must be constraints on defensive systems.[38] The British are very concerned that improvements in Soviet defensive capabilities could destroy the credibility of their deterrent and they "reject the idea that they could be expected to reduce their offensive forces in the face of dramatically improved Soviet defenses."[39] Nothing reflects the British position more clearly than the 1986 British defense white paper which says, "if Soviet and U.S. strategic arsenals were to be very substantially reduced, and if no significant changes occurred in Soviet defensive capabilities, we would want to review our position and consider how best we could contribute to arms control in the light of the reduced threat."[40] Indications are that due to the INF agreement the British will be even more adamant about their conditions being met prior to participation in arms control negotiations. This reflects British growing concerns the Soviets will eventually attempt to get British nuclear weapons on the negotiating table.[41]

B. FRENCH NUCLEAR SYSTEMS AND EMPLOYMENT DOCTRINE

France is among the few countries with strong domestic support for its nuclear forces. Although when General de Gaulle first accelerated the Fourth Republic's nuclear force programs, there was little support, today public opinion seems to be

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[36]Ibid., p. 321

[37]Margaret Thatcher interview with *Time* magazine, June 20, 1983, p. 30.

[38]John Prados, Joel S. Wit, and Michael J. Zagurek, Jr., "The Strategic Nuclear Forces of Britain and France," p. 41.

[39]David S. Yost, "The Reykjavik Summit and European Security," *SAIS Review*, vol. 7, no. 2, Summer-Fall 1987, p. 12.

[40]Great Britain, Secretary of State for Defence, *Statement on the Defence Estimates, 1986*, p. 11, cited in Yost, "The Reykjavik Summit," p. 12.

[41]"NATO Suffers Separation Anxieties," *U.S. News & World Report*, December 7, 1987, p. 39.

firmly behind the force. The reason can most probably be found in French deterrence doctrine. The French have steadfastly enunciated a strategy of *dissuasion*, or deterrence, and most of their nuclear force structure has been developed with this strategy in mind.

1. **French Nuclear Capabilities**

The French nuclear deterrent, while predominantly composed of SLBMs, is more balanced than that of Great Britain. France depends on all three legs of a strategic triad for its deterrent. As of August 1986, French forces consisted of 22 Mirage IV bombers, each with one warhead of 70 kilotons. If refueled on both legs of a trip, the Mirage IV has a range of 3,200 kilometers, enabling it to reach targets in the Soviet Union. The land-based leg of the triad consists of eighteen S-3 intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) stationed on the Albion Plateau in southeast France. Each S-3 has a one megaton warhead.

The French sea-based deterrent is formed by six SSBNs. Each of the five *Redoubtable*class SSBNs is equipped with fifteen M-20 SLBMs. Three SSBNs are on station at all times. The M-20 carries one warhead with a yield of one megaton. With a range of 3,000 km, the M-20 is an improvement over its predecessor, with improved aids for penetrating anti-missile defenses, enhanced range and rate of fire and an improved flight envelope. The sixth and newest ballistic missile submarine, the *Inflexible*, is deployed with sixteen M-4 SLBMs. With accuracy of 220-450 meters Circular Error Probable (CEP), the M-4 SLBM has considerably better capabilities than the M-20. Its range of between 4,000 and 6,000 km (compared to 3,000 km for the M-20) allows it to strike targets in the Soviet Union from positions in the Norwegian Sea or the Greenland-Iceland-U.K. gap. Originally, plans were for the M-4 to carry three non-independently targetable warheads, but the missile actually deployed carries six MIRVs.[42] In addition to a duration of fire half that of the M-20, the reentry vehicles separate and are hardened in a way which makes it impossible for interceptors to destroy more than one RV.

To enhance the credibility of its strategic forces, the French also deploy a small tactical nuclear force. First deployed in 1974, today there are 42 short-range Pluton missiles. The Pluton utilizes the AN-51 warhead with a 25-kt yield. Pluton, with a range of up to 120 km and a CEP between 150-300 meters, can be deployed with French conventional forces to keep an adversary from massing his forces. The disadvantage to this is that valuable conventional resources must be used for defense of

[42]Robbin F. Laird, *The Soviet Union, the West, and the Nuclear Arms Race*, p. 96.

the Pluton rather than for necessary conventional roles. Pluton's limited range confines its use to adversary forces already in West German territory.

In addition to Pluton, the French have a number of land-based and sea-based tactical aircraft. The 45 Jaguar and 30 Mirage III land-based aircraft are mainly used for ground-attack missions, but with a range of 720 and 800 km respectively, can also be used for strikes at the enemy's rear. The French aircraft carriers, *Clemenceau* and *Foch*, have been retrofitted to carry 36 Super Etendard aircraft, although they are capable of carrying as many as 40 aircraft each. This sea-based capability enables the French to conduct tactical nuclear strikes against either naval or land targets.

Despite fairly capable strategic and tactical nuclear capability, the French have opted to modernize their current forces, both quantitatively and qualitatively. When modernization is complete in the 1990s, the number of warheads on SLBMs alone will have increased from 80 in 1983, to 592 in 1996.[43] For a limited period in the 1990s France will have seven SSBNs, but not all will be on station at once. Plans call for four of the five *Redoubtable* class submarines to be retrofitted with the M-4 missile. The original *Redoubtable* SSBN is due to retire in 1997 and will retain the M-20 missile until that time. In addition to the newest *Inflexible* class SSBN, a new class submarine is expected to be deployed around 1994. This new SSBN will deploy a successor to the M-4, the M-5. It is expected that the M-5, reflecting French concerns with Soviet ABM capabilities, will be spin-stabilized to better penetrate ballistic missile defenses.[44]

In 1996, the French plan to deploy a road-mobile, land-based intermediate range ballistic missile, the SX, as a replacement for the Mirage IV (which will retire in 1996). With an expected range of 3,000-4,000 km, the SX will be able to reach targets almost to the Ural mountains. Speculation is that the SX will not replace the S-3, since the S-3's main purpose is to signal the seriousness of Soviet intent in case of attack.[45] In this case the S-3 may be retained in a modernized version.

The tactical arm of the French nuclear deterrent is being modernized as well. For the first time, France will have the tactical missile capability to strike targets in Warsaw Pact territory, namely East Germany and Czechoslovakia. The ASMP is an air-to-ground, stand-off missile that can reach a speed between Mach 2.5 and 3.

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[43]Ibid., p. 98.

[44]Ibid., p. 95.

[45]Ibid., p. 98. Since a sizeable attack would be required to destroy the S-3s, the French perceive that such an attack would be a clear indication of serious Soviet intent to launch an all out attack against French territory.

ASMP has a preprogrammed intertial guidance system and a range of approximately 100 km at low altitude and 300 km at high altitude. Robbin Laird cites Defense Minister Hernu as saying it will carry a 300 kt warhead.[46] For tactical purposes it will be deployed on the Super Etendard and the new Mirage 2000N. Until 1996, it will be deployed on eighteen of the Mirage IVs for a strategic mission. The newest airborne platform, the Mirage 2000N, is planned to replace the Jaguars and the Mirage IIIs. The 2000N will be a definite improvement over the older aircraft, with one-third longer range than the Mirage III, and look-down, shoot-down capability. Thirty-six of these new aircraft will be deployed by 1988 and 49 afterwards. In addition to the 2000N, the number of Super Etendards will be increased to a total of 53 after 1988.[47]

Perhaps the new Hades ground-launched missile is the weapon most likely to change the appearance of French nuclear doctrine. This missile, with a 350 km range and a 20-60 kt yield, will be able to strike East German or Czechoslovakian territory if launched from French soil. It is not just its increased range which is likely to change the military picture, but its ability to carry an enhanced radiation (ERW, or neutron bomb). Although no decision has yet been made to actually deploy the ERW, the capability implies a French intent to strike military targets.[48]

As further evidence of the importance the French government places on its deterrent forces, it is significantly working to enhance the credibility of its other forces. In the area of antisubmarine warfare, by 1992, the French fleet of attack submarines will increase from two to eight. For SSBN protection (and other missions) they will add sixteen Atlantique maritime patrol planes.[49] In addition, the French plan to enhance their command, control and communications capability with four airborne platforms for ASTARTE which can transmit orders even in conditions of severe electromagnetic pulse due to high altitude nuclear explosions. Finally, for better target coverage, the *Hélios* military observation satellite should be deployed in the early 1990s.[50] Taken together, these improvements demonstrate a French determination to provide a nuclear force better able to carry out published strategic doctrine.

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[46]Ibid., p. 101.

[47]Ibid.

[48]Ibid., p. 100.

[49]Ibid., p. 102.

[50]Ibid.

2. **Force Employment Doctrine**

French nuclear doctrine, which for years has remained the same, appears to be shifting, if not changing radically. Since France first developed an independent deterrent, its doctrine has been that there is a fundamental difference between nuclear and conventional weapons and that nuclear weapons are only usable when French survival is at stake. While the military purpose of French nuclear forces is *dissuasion*, or deterrence, the political purpose is to ensure France's independence. The French objective, demonstrated by their emphasis on a sea-based deterrent, is to have a survivable second-strike force. Furthermore, French governments have made it clear that the only possible response to a nuclear strike against French soil is a French strategic attack.

The vulnerable S-3 IRBM force on the Albion Plateau would seem to belie the importance of survivable forces. Although many critics cite the vulnerability of the S-3 silos as weakening credibility, the French government considers the IRBMs as indicators of Soviet intentions. Because it is estimated that it would take a 20-megaton attack to destroy the Albion Plateau,[51] an attack of such magnitude would warrant a French strategic retaliatory strike.

The rationale for an independent nuclear arsenal is to "sanctuarize" French territory and to create an alternate nuclear decision making center, a concept the French claim the United States recognized as legitimate in the Ottawa Declaration of 1974.[52] The French strategy is one of "proportional deterrence." It is based on their ability to inflict proportionally greater damage on the Soviet Union than the value to be gained by Moscow in destroying France. According to French strategists, this is to be achieved through countervalue targeting instead of counterforce targeting.

Although French targeting has historically been aimed at cities, there has recently been a "refinement" of targeting plans. More emphasis is now put on destroying Soviet infrastructure; the objective being to destroy the *oeuvres vives*, or vital works of the adversary. This "enlarged anti-cities" strategy developed in part because of the realization, expressed in 1977 by General Méry that Soviet civil defense could lessen the effect of the anti-cities deterrent.[53] Despite this shift in French doctrine to an

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[51] *Le Monde* (Paris), May 23, 1980, cited in Laird, *The Soviet Union, the West, and the Nuclear Arms Race*, p. 89.

[52] Ibid., p. 85.

[53] See Yost, "French Nuclear Targeting," p. 132.

enlarged anti-cities strategy there has not been such a shift so as to create the problem of choosing between counterforce and countercities.[54]

Within the context of French strategic doctrine tactical nuclear weapons serve two purposes: to enhance the credibility of strategic deterrence, and to serve as a warning shot, signalling the French intent to use strategic weapons. According to Freedman, France has an approach to tactical nuclear weapons which emphasizes that as a warning shot, they do not need many tactical weapons and that unlike American tactical nuclear weapons, theirs are not for battlefield use.[55]

Both recent shifts in French public policy pronouncements, and the capabilities of the Hades and ASMP might cause some to doubt that affirmation. Lawrence Freedman credits French Chief of Staff, General Méry with developing the concept in 1976 of "enlarged sanctuarization"--a concept which implies extending the French nuclear umbrella beyond the French borders.[56] In 1977, French Prime Minister Raymond Barre went so far as to say that the French deterrent could apply to neighboring and allied territories. Although they still maintain their policy is one of massive retaliation, in 1981 Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy said that the French must not only be concerned with an attack on France, but must ". . . draw our own conclusions when we examine our border defenses and their approaches."[57]

The seeming contradictions between a strategic doctrine of "sanctuarization", defense only of French territory and talk of "enlarged sanctuary" and possible defense of the FRG, are creating a French strategic dilemma. Furthermore, the old French concept of two battles--one for Western Europe and one for French national security was rejected back in the 1970's. Regarding French nuclear doctrine, Robbin Laird has said that rather than say, "the policy of France is independent," it would be better to say, "the policy of France is as independent as possible."[58]

3. **Arms Control Policies**

The French position on arms control has softened somewhat since the 1960's when, by refusing to occupy its seat on the Geneva Disarmament Committee, France pursued what was called the "empty chair policy." Although French leaders were not

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[54]Raymond Barre, "Politique de défense de la France," *Défense Nationale*, November 1980, p. 14, cited in Yost, "French Nuclear Targeting," p. 132.

[55]Freedman, "The Role of Third-Country Nuclear Forces," p. 131.

[56]Ibid., p. 126.

[57]Ibid., p. 129, citing *The International Herald Tribune*, September 15, 1981.

[58]Robbin Laird, *The Soviet Union, the West, and the Nuclear Arms Race*, p. 130.

against arms control they did object to what they felt was superpower domination of the process. This attitude can still be detected today in French conditions for participating in arms control negotiations. Foremost among French concerns in any negotiation is to ensure the improvement and credibility of their forces.

Like the British, the French are adamantly opposed to the inclusion of their forces in U.S.-Soviet negotiations. The French consider absurd Soviet claims that French nuclear weapons are synonomous with the U.S. and NATO. Whereas one might have reason to doubt an independent British nuclear policy, due to the "special relationship," there is no Franco-American special relationship, and consequently no reason to question the independent nature of French nuclear weapons policy. This independence concerns not only French nuclear weapons doctrine, but negotiations as well. The French were most alarmed by the implications of Secretary of State Shultz' October 1986 post-Reykjavik statement that ". . . We and the Soviets aren't going to get rid of all our ballistic missiles and leave some other countries with them."[59] Raymond Barre responded that the French realize the U.S. will exert strong pressure on countries which retain nuclear weapons, but reasserted France's determination to maintain its deterrent.[60]

French conditions for participation in any arms control discussions remain more or less what they have always been. First, the superpowers must drastically decrease their arsenals to such a point where the gap between their capabilities and those of the French are changed in nature. Second, there must be quantitative and qualitative limitations on defensive systems. The French, like the British, are concerned about ballistic missile defenses(BMD), due to the obvious effect BMD would have on the credibility of the French strategic deterrent. This concern applies not only to Soviet BMD, but to the American Strategic Defense Initiative as well. The French concern regarding SDI is that its development will provoke the Soviets to a BMD "race." In fact, France would likely increase its offensive nuclear forces in the face of improved Soviet defenses. Finally, reflecting what has been a French concern for many years, significant progress in correcting conventional imbalances and eliminating chemical and biological weapons must also be achieved.[61]

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[59]"Shultz: You've Got to Be Patient," *Washington Post*, October 15, 1986, p. A24.

[60]*Le Monde*, (Paris), November 25, 1986, p. 8, cited in Yost, "The Reykjavik Summit," p. 8.

[61]See David Yost, "France's Deterrent Posture and Security in Europe Part II:

A French government interview source recently indicated that, in light of a possible INF agreement, the French are even more unlikely to change their stance regarding arms control. The French supported the U.S. INF deployments from the beginning as an important "coupling" factor and fear that the proposed agreement will once again tend to "decouple" the U.S. central systems from the defense of Europe. Confronted once again with disparities between Soviet and NATO military capabilities, the French see an even greater need for a credible deterrent against Soviet aggression.

Robbin Laird posits three reasons the French resist Soviet arms control demands:

(1) In INF, the Soviet military threat still has not been offset.

(2) They reject what amount to Soviet claims for nuclear superiority which are implied by their insistence on maintaining a capability equal to that of the U.S., France, and Great Britain, combined.

(3) Inclusion of French nuclear forces in an arms control forum would force the recognition of a French nuclear role broader than that of defending only vital interests.[62]

It seems unlikely that the French will ever agree to their weapons being counted in a U.S.-Soviet arms control agreement. Nor does it seem likely France would agree to French-Soviet arms control negotiations. It would be optimistic to predict that France's conditions for participation in arms control negotiations are likely to be met in the immediate future. And since France has maintained a consistently firm line, its requirements are not likely to be softened.

Strategic and Arms Control Implications," *Adelphi Papers*, No. 195, International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1984.

[62]Robbin Laird, "The Soviet Union, the West, and the Nuclear Arms Race," p. 122.

III. THE ISSUE OF BRITISH AND FRENCH NUCLEAR FORCES IN US-SOVIET ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS

British and French nuclear weapons have been discussed in U.S.-Soviet nuclear arms control negotiations since SALT I began in 1969. While the rhetoric was not especially strong in SALT I and SALT II, the weapons were an issue nonetheless. Since the INF talks began in October 1980, the focus of Soviet proposals has shifted from including British and French nuclear systems in American totals to the idea of separate Soviet-British and Soviet-French negotiations, and on to equating British and French systems with the Soviet SS-20. This chapter provides a chronological survey of how the problem of third-country nuclear forces has been addressed in four U.S.-Soviet nuclear arms control negotiations since 1969--SALT I, SALT II, START, and INF. Only the major proposals, dealing with British and French nuclear weapons will be reviewed.

A. SALT I

The Soviets initiated the debate on French and British nuclear weapons in the SALT I negotiations. At the time the Soviets were most concerned about what they termed American "forward based systems" (FBS), that is , systems deployed in or around Europe which could strike Soviet territory. According to the Soviet definition, any delivery systems which can strike the territory of one of the superpowers are "strategic." This definition excludes Soviet weapons which can strike U.S. allies in Europe and Asia, but includes those of Great Britain and France as well as American FBS. The U.S. resisted the Soviet definition and in "Agreed Statement A" of the Interim Agreement, strategic ballistic missiles were defined as "capable of ranges in excess of the shortest distance between the northeastern border of the continental U.S. and the northwestern border of the continental U.S.S.R." Initially the Soviets did not express much apprehension concerning the capabilities of allied forces. When American and Soviet negotiators first met in Helsinki in November 1969, the Soviet fears regarding third-country forces appeared to be directed more at the People's Republic of China. Soviet negotiators consistently stressed the need for an American-Soviet agreement to respond agains "provocative attacks" by third countries.[63] The

[63]Gerard Smith, *Doubletalk: The Story of SALT I*, University Press of America, 1985, p. 96.

Soviet's professed anxiety was that a third country might embroil the United States and the Soviet Union in a nuclear confrontation. Great Britain and France were sources of Soviet concern, the Soviets asserted, because they felt the United States could circumvent an eventual SALT I agreement by transferring SALT-restricted systems to allies. The Soviets offered what they felt was ample proof that this was a valid fear: the American proposal in 1957 to deploy ballistic missiles in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Multilateral Nuclear Force proposal, and the sale of Polaris to the United Kingdom. Gerard Smith, the chief negotiator for the American delegation, said that third-country forces were beyond the scope of SALT I. Smith told the Soviets that "the United States was not about to prejudice interests of allies in order to reach an agreement with the U.S.S.R."[64] Ambassador Smith predicted, however, that the issue would be a problem in a letter to President Nixon: "It has for the Soviets the advantage of being potentially a divisive issue between the U.S. and its allies."[65]

When the delegations met in Vienna in April 1970 to begin negotiating in earnest, the Soviets continued to express concern on the issue of third-party provocative attacks and to seek a "no-transfer" provision. Eventually, recalls Smith, as it appeared less probable the two sides would reach a comprehensive agreement to limit offensive weapons, the Soviets quit pressing the matter.[66]

On May 17, 1972, the Soviet negotiator, Minister Semenov, made a Soviet unilateral statement regarding the SALT I Interim Agreement. It said:

> Taking into account that modern ballistic missile submarines are presently in the possession of not only the U.S., but also of its NATO allies, the Soviet Union agrees that for the period of effectiveness of the Interim "freeze" agreement the U.S. and its NATO allies have up to 50 such submarines with a total of up to 800 ballistic missile launchers thereon (including 41 U.S. submarines with 656 ballistic missile launchers). However, if during the period of effectiveness of the Agreement U.S. allies in NATO should increase the number of their modern submarines to exceed the numbers of submarines they would have operational or under construction on the date of signature of the Agreement, the Soviet Union will have the right to a corresponding increase in the number of its submarines. In the opinion of the Soviet side, the solution of the question of modern ballistic missile submarines provided for in the Interim Agreement only partially compensates for the strategic imbalance in the deployment of nuclear-pwered missile submarines of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. Therefore, the Soviet side believes that this whole question, and above all the question of liquidating the

[64]Ibid., p. 97.

[65]Ibid., p. 98.

[66]Ibid., p. 146.

American missile submarine bases outside the U.S., will be appropriately resolved in the course of follow-on negotiations.[67]

The U.S. was not surprised by this position. When Henry Kissinger, President Nixon's national security affairs advisor travelled to Moscow in April, Brezhnev had given him a paper containing a Soviet proposal for an SLBM freeze which contained basically the same elements.[68] Although the U.S. eventually agreed to unequal SLBM (and ICBM) ceilings, twice Washington refused to agree to the Soviet unilateral statement.[69]

B. SALT II

In SALT II the Soviets continued to call for compensation for FBS and British and French nuclear weapons. At the Vladivostok summit in November 1974, President Ford and Leonid Brezhnev reached a compromise, agreeing to equal numerical ceilings for strategic nuclear launch vehicles (SNLVs). Of the 2,400 ceiling for SNLVs, 1,320 could be MIRVed. Both sides made concessions in a compromise package. The Soviets accepted equal aggregates, a concept they had previously resisted and dropped the issue of FBS and British and French nuclear weapons systems. The U.S. agreed to withdraw demands for cuts in Soviet heavy missiles and to include heavy bombers under the ceiling of strategic launchers.[70] Although some political analysts take the position that concessions were made by both sides as part of a package of compromises, Strobe Talbott says the Soviets claimed they were allowed to retain their

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[67]SALT I Interim Agreement.

[68]Gerard Smith, *Doubletalk*, p. 370. The U.S. was willing to accept unequal ceilings on SLBMs because it was felt necessary to get the Soviets to agree to a freeze. American Poseidon missiles would not be ready for deployment until after the interim agreement expired and it was felt that in the meantime the Soviet development of SLBMs must be contained to keep them from "gaining" on the Americans.

[69]Eric. J. Grove, in "Allied Nuclear Forces Complicate Negotiations," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist*, June-July 1986, p. 21, says that the U.S. allowed the Soviets superiority in SLBMs and that the tacit motive was to meet Soviet concerns about British and French SLBMs as well as other issues. He goes on to say that the Jackson Amendment ensured that in the future the U.S. could not make any such concessions. This interpretation is not unanimous among political scientists. British and French nuclear weapons are not mentioned at all in the Interim Agreement, and the U.S. as noted above, rejected Soviet claims in the unilateral statement.

[70]It might appear that the Soviets got the best of the deal. The ceilings under Vladivostok were high enough so they could retain the weapons they valued most, and also still develop their MIRV program. They also got heavy bombers, in which the Americans had a significant advantage, included under the ceiling, while retaining their own heavy missiles which had long worried the U.S.

superiority in heavy missiles as compensation for British and French nuclear weapons, as well as FBS.[71] The U.S. denied that any such compensations were made. In response to questions concerning compensation in SALT II, at a November 24, 1974 press conference, Henry Kissinger said, " There is no compensation for forward-based systems and no other compensations."[72]

C. INF 1981-1983

When the INF talks started, so did the Soviet demands for compensation--much more insistently than before. Until 1980 the Soviets regarded, as noted, the forces of Britain and France as "strategic." But for most of the past six years, the Soviets have claimed that British and French nuclear forces are part of a theater balance which existed in Europe prior to the deployment of American intermediate range nuclear forces in 1983.

On November 18, 1983, Ronald Reagan made his famous "zero-option" proposal. The proposal was quite simple: zero American INF missile deployments in exchange for zero Soviet intermediate-range missiles (SS-20s, SS-4s, and SS-5s). The nature of the Kremlin's response was to be expected. Brezhnev called for a moratorium by both NATO and the Soviet Union on deployments of new intermediate-range missiles in Europe until a treaty was signed.[73] Brezhnev denied harboring a desire to reduce the arsenals of France and Great Britain, saying he only wanted to take their existence into consideration.[74] However, Soviet proposals also held that, if the West was not prepared for a complete moratorium, then agreement could be "limited" to all nuclear weapons with a "combat radius" of 1,000 kilometers or more, deployed in or around the European continent and intended for use in Europe.

Although the Soviet Union started with much higher figures than did the United States, they asserted that there were approximately 1,000 medium-range systems (including aircraft) deployed by each side and their proposal in the opening stages of INF was that the U.S.S.R. and NATO (France, Great Britain and the U.S.) reduce medium-range missiles and aircraft in or "intended for use" in Europe to 300.[75]

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[71]Talbott, Strobe, *Deadly Gambits*, Vintage Books, 1984, p. 219.

[72]Henry Kissinger, Press conference, November 24, 1974, *Documents on Disarmament*, U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1976.

[73]Leonid Brezhnev, November 2, 1981 interview with *Der Spiegel*, excerpts printed in *Survival*, vol. xxiv, no. 1, January/February 1982.

[74]Ibid.

[75]The Soviets proposed reductions to 600 units on each side by 1985, and further

According to this proposal, the U.S. ceiling, set by the Soviets, would be decreased by 255 to take into account Soviet estimates of British and French nuclear weapons, including 162 missiles. The end result would have been that the United States could deploy only 45 medium-range systems in the theater. The explicit Soviet position was that the U.S.S.R was willing to go to zero too, providing they retained enough missiles to offset whatever number of nuclear weapons France and the U.K. had.

The "walk in the woods" compromise of July 1982 has provoked much debate between American negotiator Paul Nitze and Soviet negotiator Yuli Kvitsinsky as to what really occurred. Nitze had hoped that in opening an unofficial channel for discussions, he could get some movement toward an agreement. In SALT I he had conducted this sort of negotiations with the Soviet negotiator Shchukin with what Nitze felt were favorable results. In the course of their "walk" Nitze proposed to Kvitsinsky that the Soviet Union reduce its SS-20 deployments in Europe by two-thirds, retaining 75. The United States would forgo deployment of Pershing IIs and match the SS-20s with 75 cruise missile launchers. This compromise would permit the Soviets to have a monopoly on ground-based intermediate-range ballistic missiles in Europe and the U.S. to have a monopoly in ground-based long-range cruise missiles. The U.S. numerical advantage (300 missiles--4 warheads x 75 launchers--against 225 SS-20 warheads--3 warheads x 75 launchers--), would be compensation for the faster flight time of ballistic missiles as well as the vulnerability of cruise missiles to air defenses.[76] The Soviets could claim to themselves their monopoly in ballistic missiles was compensation for those of Great Britain and France, although neither the U.S., nor Britain, nor France would accept this claim.

The final product of the "walk in the woods" was, Nitze said, a joint effort, although he admitted most of the effort was his.[77] This "exploratory package" as Nitze called it, contained most of Nitze's proposal, with the exception that the Soviets would freeze SS-20 launchers deployments in Asia to about current levels (90) instead of the reduction to 75 which Nitze had suggested. The attractive aspect of the package was supposedly to have been its deniability. Since the discussions had been held in private, either government could reject the proposal or attribute it to the other, which as it turned out is what happened.[78] Washington was less than enthusiastic when Nitze

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reductions to 300 by 1990.

[76]Talbott, *Deadly Gambits*, p. 125.

[77]Ibid., p. 125.

[78]In his chapter detailing the walk in the woods, *Deadly Gambits*, pp. 116-151,

briefed the President about the plan and Secretary of State Shultz was instructed to respond negatively to "the Soviet Proposal," making it clear that the American position was still the "zero-option." It was not until September of that year that the Soviets responded, negatively, to the proposal. When the episode leaked out in the press later, the Soviets tried to make it seem that the proposal had been an American one, which they had subsequently withdrawn, thereby losing a chance for an INF agreement[79]

In December 1982, Yuri Andropov indicated his willingness to retain only 162 medium-range missiles in the European part of the Soviet Union to offset British and French systems.[80] Moscow contended that under this proposal the Soviet Union would have reduced by hundreds its arsenal of medium-range missiles, dozens of which would be SS-20s. Furthermore, if France and the United Kingdom reduced their arsenals in the future, so would the Soviet Union. Lothar Ruehl, State Secretary in the West German Ministry of Defense, said that Andropov offered to "come to a bilateral zero option" with Great Britain and France, an offer which would have resulted in their total strategic nuclear disarmament.[81] At the same time Andropov indicated he might be willing to count warheads rather than missiles, if the West so desired.

In March 1983 President Reagan proposed an "interim solution," hoping to break the impasse in negotiations. Under this solution the United States was prepared " . . . to substantially reduce its planned deployment of Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles, provided the Soviet Union reduced the number of its warheads on longer-range INF missiles to an equal level on a global basis.[82] This proposal reflected five "criteria" the President had set for an INF agreement: equality; non-compensation for British and French nuclear weapons; global limits on SS-20s; verifiability; and protecting NATO conventional defenses.

Talbott says that while Nitze was not acting under instructions from Washington, Kvitsinsky was acting strictly according to Moscow's directions, therefore Nitze could ascertain how far the Soviets were willing to go, while the Soviets could only know how far Nitze himself was willing to go.

[79]Yuli Kvitsinsky, "Soviet View of Geneva," *The New York Times*, January 12, 1984, p. A.31.

[80]Paul Nitze, Statement at *Wehrkunde* Conference in Munich, February 12, 1983, cited in Yost, *Adelphi Papers, Part II*, p. 56.

[81]Yost, *Adelphi Papers, Part II*, p. 58.

[82]President Reagan's March 30, 1983 statement to the press, cited in Talbott's *Deadly Gambits*, p. 181.

The Kremlin's response to this U.S. interim solution proposal was no, and in May 1983 Andropov made another, quite interesting proposal. He offered to reduce to the same number of warheads as France and Great Britain. The result would have been seventeen fewer missiles than under his December 1982 proposal. However, if this concept of matching British and French warhead numbers had been accepted, the Soviet would have been justified in building up its forces when the U.K. and France increased theirs under modernization. In June of the same year, the Supreme Soviet ordered the Soviet government to propose that the United States, Great Britain, France, China and the Soviet Union freeze their nuclear weapons.[83]

On August 28, 1983, the Soviets made what seemed to be a significant move. While still claiming the right to keep a number of SS-20s in Europe equal to British and French ballistic missile deployments, Andropov indicated he would have the 81 extra SS-20s destroyed. Up until then the Soviets had always stated they would move the missiles east of the Urals, an alternative that would have been unattractive for the West, partly because the SS-20s could always be moved back.

In November, as the deadline for deploying American missiles approached, Kvitsinsky suggested privately to Nitze that if the United States proposed equal reductions of 572 warheads by each side (that is, zero deployments by the U.S.) the Soviet government would accept it and the issue of compensation for British and French forces could be addressed in future negotiations.[84] Yuli Kvitsinsky asserts that it was Nitze who made the offer; that throughout the summer and fall of 1983 Washington had been trying to find a solution which would "tacitly 'compensate' the Soviet Union for these weapons but would also save face for Washington and would not irritate the French and British Governments."[85] That was the last proposal either side made before the Soviets walked out on November 23, 1983.

D. START AND INF SINCE 1985

Following the resumption of INF talks in March 1985, the Soviet Union drastically changed its position. In SALT II the issue of compensation for British and French forces had been postponed, it was assumed, until SALT III talks. At the 1979 Vienna summit, Brezhnev made it clear that he expected the French, British and

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[83]Sobakin. *Equal Security*, p. 104.

[84]Paul Nitze, "The U.S. Negotiator's View of Geneva Talks," *The New York Times*, January 19, 1984, p. A23, and Talbott, *Deadly Gambits*, pp. 200-203.

[85]Kvitsinsky, "Soviet View of Geneva," p. A23.

Chinese to participate in SALT III.[86] However, in 1980 Soviet leaders were willing to exclude British and French nuclear weapons from at least the opening phases of SALT III.[87] When the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) began in 1982 in place of SALT III, the Soviets once again felt free to bring up the compensation in light of American demands for reductions in heavy missiles.[88]

Up until the Soviets walked out of both INF and START in December, 1983, they continued to insist on compensation for British and French nuclear forces. In 1985 when the INF and START talks resumed, they were two parts within a three-part set of talks, the third part being devoted to defense and space. Since Mikhail Gorbachev has come to power, the Soviet Union's position has changed substantially. On October 3, 1985, Gorbachev broke drastically with previous Soviet proposals. Included in a sweeeping proposal for 50 percent reductions in nuclear arms capable of reaching the territory of the superpowers was a call for direct negotiations with Great Britain and France. Concerning the French refusal to have its forces limited in a bilateral superpower agreement, Gorbachev said, "It was said from the French side that the nuclear forces of France are not subject to discussion without her participation. This stands to reason."[89] Reading between the lines of the Soviet leader's proposal one perceived a Soviet willingness to accept some Pershing and ground-launched cruise missile deployments provided they counted against American strategic ceilings (since they fell under the definition of the group of weapons to be reduced by 50 percent). This proposal would have forced the United States to decrease its ICBMs to allow INF deployment.

The compensation issue appeared in a new form in January 1986. Moscow called for complete disarmament by the end of the century, to be accomplished in three stages.[90] Although during the initial stage, British and French nuclear weapons would not be counted with American totals, Gorbachev called upon the United Kingdom and France to freeze their weapons at current levels (thus halting modernization), while the

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[86]Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith*, Bantam Books, 1982, p. 255.

[87]Yost, *Adelphi Papers, Part II*, p. 59.

[88]William Echikson, "French, British Arms Darken Geneva Talks," *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 4, 1986, p. 9.

[89]"Excerpts from Gorbachev's Speech in Paris," *The Washington Post*, October 4, 1985.

[90]Serge Schmemann, "Gorbachev Offers to Scrap A-Arms within 15 Years," *The New York Times*, January 15, 1986, p. 1.

U.S. and U.S.S.R. engaged in arms control talks. Included in this proposal was an attempt to get the U.S. to agree not to transfer Trident to Great Britain. At a later stage, China, France and Great Britain would be invited to join the U.S. and the Soviet Union in reducing nuclear weapons. All of this was dependent on both sides renouncing "development, testing and deployment" of what the Soviets termed "space-strike weapons," a condition designed to halt President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and U.S. antisatellite programs. In a July 16 clarification of their position, Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze indicated that the British and French nuclear freeze need not affect their modernization plans.[91]

There has been much controversy surrounding the October 1986 Reykjavik summit between Gorbachev and Reagan. One thing is clear, however. For the first time it appeared that the Soviets were prepared to drop their compensation demands completely in the INF context. Although attempts to reach agreement went awry over the issue of SDI, the two sides came very close to reaching agreement on intermediate-range missiles. Gorbachev proposed the same 50 percent reductions in strategic offensive arms as had been proposed in October 1985, and the elimination of all American and Soviet long-range intermediate range theater nuclear forces in Europe. The Soviets could retain 100 LRTNF in Asia and the U.S. could retain 100 in North America. In addition the Soviets would withdraw demands for compensation for the British and French forces and would decrease the Soviet SS-18 "heavy" missiles.[92] Under Moscow's proposal, negotiations would begin for a comprehensive nuclear test ban. Finally, Gorbachev proposed that each side agree to adhere to the ABM Treaty for a period of ten years, at the end of which the sides could deploy ballistic missile defenses(BMD), subject to mutual agreement, which in effect would give the Soviets a veto over SDI deployments. During the ten year period, SDI would be limited to laboratory testing. During the negotiations, Gorbachev reiterated a previously stated willingness to eliminate all nuclear weapons.

President Reagan was willing to accept the 50 percent reduction, which would have included ICBMs, SLBMs, and bombers, and of course, the exclusion of British and French forces from American force ceilings. Here agreement stopped. The compromise the Americans hammered out on the spot called for an initial five-year

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[91]Karen de Young, "Soviets Modify Stance on British, French Arms," *The Washington Post*, July 17, 1986, p. A27.

[92]This was something that had been a priority for American negotiators since SALT II.

adherence to the ABM Treaty during which time the 50 percent reductions would begin. The U.S. would adhere for a second five years if remaining offensive ballistic missiles were being eliminated. When making the American counter-proposal Secretary of State Shultz did not specify how the Reagan administration would define "adherence" to the ABM Treaty. President Reagan insisted, however, that at the end of this ten year period both sides could deploy BMD. In response to Gorbachev's proposal to eliminate nuclear weapons (and reflecting a July 1986 plan), President Reagan offered to eliminate all ballistic missiles by the year 1996.[93] The talks broke off when the Soviets continued to insist on the Soviet "veto" over SDI implicit in Gorbachev's proposal.[94] It appeared at that time that the possibility to conclude an INF agreement was lost.

On February 28, 1987, however, Secretary Gorbachev agreed to negotiate a LRTNF zero-option "without delay" and to "de-link" it from unsettled issues of strategic offensive and defensive forces. In clarification of the proposal, Soviet Chief of Staff Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev announced on March 2 that the latest proposal did not include demands that British and French nuclear forces be taken into account. He went on to say that London and Paris however, would eventually be called on to join the disarmament process.[95]

The compensation issue remains today what it was on March 2, 1987. Now the question is, how will the issue develop in future arms control fora, such as START? It is hard to predict, but an examination of each side's policies might point the way and help to illustrate the issues posed by the Soviet demands regarding the British and French forces.

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[93]Don Oberdorfer, "At Reykjavik, Soviets were Prepared and U.S. Improvised," *The Washington Post*, February 16, 1987, p. 1.

[94]Ibid.

[95]Christopher Walker, "Britain Could Keep Missiles in Soviet Deal," *The Times* (London), March 3, 1987, p. 1.

IV. ANALYSIS

A. THE PATTERN OF U.S. POLICY FORMULATIONS

This chapter attempts to trace the development of Soviet and American policies relating to independent European nuclear weapons and their role in arms control. Because both the United States and the Soviet Union tend to discuss the problem of British and French nuclear weapons in arms control negotiations within a NATO context, the chapter also addresses possible implications for the security and cohesion of the Alliance.

Although the United States government takes the position that it will not negotiate for its allies in bilateral arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union, Great Britain and France have judged that they have reason for concern that the United States might pressure them to participate. The history of American policy *vis-à-vis* British and French nuclear capabilities is not a consistent one; nor has the U.S. always practiced its publicly stated policy. Furthermore, it appears that over the years U.S. policy in relation to European nuclear powers has fluctuated along with U.S. objectives within the North Atlantic Alliance.

During the Kennedy administration, some U.S. officials, principally Secretary of Defense McNamara, tried to discourage Great Britain from maintaining an independent nuclear capability.[96] In the late 1950's and early 1960's the fear of a West German interest in an autonomous nuclear capability seemed to be one of the driving factors behind the lack of support for independent nuclear deterrents. As a matter of fact, one sees a kind of "German thread" running through the history of the debate on independent nuclear forces in NATO. President Kennedy himself said that an independent French deterrent "might hasten the day when the Germans would demand nuclear weapons for themselves."[97] According to Peter Malone, analyses of the day claiming that the French *force de frappe* would make German nuclear forces inevitable were widely embraced.[98]

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[96]William W. Kaufman, *The McNamara Strategy*, Harper & Row, 1964, pp. 102-134.

[97]Arthur Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965, p. 849.

[98]Peter Malone, *The British Nuclear Deterrent*, Croom Helm, 1984, p. 32.

McNamara's antagonism toward the British and French forces was largely strategically motivated. It appears that as the vulnerability of U.S. cities increased due to Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), American tolerance for so-called "autonomous decision-making centers" decreased. According to McNamara, national nuclear forces were "dangerous, expensive, prone to obsolescence and lacking in credibility as a deterrent."[99] McNamara's strategy was to use counterforce targeting in case of a nuclear confrontation to give the Soviet Union an incentive not to strike American cities. Chief among his concerns was to prevent an escalation of a nuclear exchange to countervalue strikes. According to Malone, McNamara considered it imperative to control the employment of nuclear weapons. It was feared that European nuclear weapons employment could undermine American attempts to control the scope of any nuclear conflict.[100] McNamara was convinced of the necessity to maintain a credible conventional deterrent and was alarmed by the European tendency to want to rely on nuclear weapons to deter Soviet aggression.

McNamara fell out with Charles de Gaulle when the U.S. Defense Secretary insisted that French nuclear force planning be coordinated through NATO. De Gaulle, of course, insisted on maintaining independent control. Paradoxically, American operational policy was to support the British development of an independent deterrent. Despite opposition from some policymakers, the U.S. agreed to sell the British Skybolt, and subsequently, Polaris as a substitute for Skybolt.

Peter Malone argues that the American objections to independent nuclear forces were to a great extent a by-product of U.S. attempts to restructure the Alliance. Following this logic, current American support for British and French deterrents is a result of the "crisis" in the Alliance and an attempt to foster cohesion, coupled with recognition of the critical role British and French nuclear forces play. During the early 1950's the United States, after initial opposition to the idea, strongly supported the concept of an integrated European Defense Community(EDC). Although Great Britain declined to participate from the onset, and the French in 1954 reversed themselves and rejected the treaty, the United States continued for several years to try to "unify" Western Europe.

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[99]Kaufman, *The McNamara Strategy*, p. 117.

[100]Peter Malone, *The British Nuclear Deterrent*, p. 163.

Until 1965, when Lyndon Johnson finally realized how little European or congressional support there was for a Multilateral Force (MLF), some U.S. officials continued to resist the idea of British and French independent national nuclear forces, as running counter to the interests of achieving European unification.[101] Some members State Department officials felt in fact that the decision for nuclear cooperation with Great Britain on Polaris was a mistake and would only encourage the British to continue to preserve "an outdated image of power."[102]

In 1969, however, the U.S. government's position began to change for two principal reasons. The Federal Republic of Germany signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), calming fears of a German nuclear potential. Although apprehension regarding West German nuclear weapons potential caused some of the opposition to European independent nuclear weapons, the FRG's policy of *Ostpolitik* stimulated support for independent nuclear deterrents in the early 1970's. The FRG was experiencing a growth in confidence due to a new economic and political independence. As West Germany grew in strength, and pursued better relations with the East, it was felt necessary for intra-European stability that Great Britain and France not lose their position of power and influence relative to Germany.

Second, President Nixon and his principal foreign policy advisor, Henry Kissinger, did not share the previous administration's obsession with European integration. As a matter of fact, when asked to take advantage of an upcoming European tour by voicing American support for an integrated Europe, Nixon (on Kissinger's advice) said that he had no intention of interfering in European internal affairs.[103] What was remarkable in light of the previous American vehemence concerning British and French nuclear weapons, President Nixon and French President Georges Pompidou agreed to conduct staff level military discussions--discussions which, Malone says, probably included "problems of operational co-ordination in strategic nuclear weapons employment conditions."[104]

There were, however, American leaders of the opinion that independent nuclear powers, France especially, were a luxury that NATO could ill afford. Senator Sam Nunn was one of these. In 1974, he said,

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[101]During this time, the U.S. continued to sell Polaris to the U.K. and KC-135s to France.

[102]Peter Malone, *The British Nuclear Deterrent*, p. 167.

[103]Ibid., p. 171.

[104]Ibid., p. 171.

> France by its policies reduces the possibility of a conventional defense and significantly lowers the nuclear threshold . . . French tactical nuclear weapons, if used in the midst of a conventional engagement between NATO . . . and Warsaw Pact forces, could force the U.S. into a nuclear war. The Alliance has been able to tolerate this bad situation during the period of U.S. nuclear superiority, but strategic parity makes the French position totally at odds with the best interest of NATO and stability in central Europe."[105]

In rebuttal of Senator Nunn, Jacques Andréani, at the time, Director of Political Affairs for the French Foreign Ministry said:

> It is obvious that a country that would be risking its very existence would not do so lightly, and nothing proves that France's crossing the nuclear threshold would ignite a total holocaust in circumstances where that would not be likely to happen anyway. If the French force adds a supplementary element to the nuclear risk, that is what a potential aggressor would have to reckon with, complicating his calculations and thereby increasing not insecurity but--on the contrary-- protection.[106]

Since then, the United States has been openly supportive of the independent nuclear deterrents of its allies. The 1974 Ottawa Declaration codified U.S. approval of these national nuclear forces for the first time.[107] These forces were perceived as providing an intra-European balance between France, the U.K. and West Germany. And of course, there was the "special relationship" with Great Britain. The United States and Great Britain have often perceived things in the same way, so it was only natural that the U.S. would wish the British to have a strong voice in political-military affairs.

American public policy has also been reflected in the U.S. negotiating position regarding Soviet demands that British and French nuclear weapons be counted in U.S.-U.S.S.R. bilateral negotiations. It is interesting to note the differing negotiating styles of the Soviet Union and the United States on this matter. As shall be seen in the next section, the Soviets have steadfastly pursued the objective of taking these forces into account since the SALT I negotiations. One thinks of the Soviets as being very firm in their negotiating position, but they have time and again "regrouped" on this

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[105]*Policy, Troops and the NATO Alliance: Report of Senator Nunn to the Senate Committee on Armed Services*, Government Printing Office, 1974, p. 3.

[106]Jacques Andréani, *Politique Etrangere*, Summer 1983, p. 350, cited in Yost, *Adelphi Papers*, p. 21.

[107]North Atlantic Council, "Ottawa Declaration on Atlantic Relations," *U.S. Department of State Bulletin*, July 8, 1974.

issue for tactical reasons. The Soviets would have us believe the United States wavers in its support of allies. Yet, on this particular issue, American presidents have stood firm over the years. Despite Alliance fears, to date the U.S. has not been willing to negotiate at all on "compensation." Chapter III has examined SALT I, SALT II, START and INF, and it is evident that the American negotiating position has been unequivocal. Despite Soviet insinuations in the past that certain American concessions were tacit compensation for British and French nuclear weapons, the U.S. has never consciously conceded on this issue.

Paul Warnke, Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency during the Carter presidency, said in January 1978 that, ". . . the SALT negotiations have been exclusively bilateral, and SALT II, at least, will continue to be exclusively bilateral, and certainly nothing that we do would be designed in any way to inhibit any option that the French want to exercise by themselves."[108] In his memoirs, former President Jimmy Carter makes brief reference to third countries. During the 1979 Vienna summit meeting with Leonid Brezhnev, Brezhnev took the position that in SALT III other countries would have to be involved. Later at a banquet hosted by the Soviet Union, in a conversation with Andrei Gromyko, Carter asked, ". . . if he was sincere about involving the other three countries--France, Great Britain, and China--in the future SALT III talks. When I offered to be responsible for France and Great Britain if he would be responsible for China, he threw up his hands in mock horror at the thought."[109]

Further support for the British nuclear deterrent came in Defense Secretary Harold Brown's Annual Report to Congress for 1982, where he stated tht the British selection of Trident to modernize their forces, enhanced "the security not only of the United States and the United Kingdom, but of our allies and the world generally."[110] The American government's decision to sell Trident to the British provides additional proof of American support for the British modernization plans.

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[108]Paul Warnke, Speech to the Overseas Writers Club, January 6, 1978, cited in Yost, *Adelphi Papers*, p. 56.

[109]Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith*, Bantam Books, 1982, p. 257.

[110]U.S. Department of Defence, *Annual Report to the Congress for Fiscal Year 1982*, Government Printing Office, 1981, p. 47.

In 1982, Secretary of Defense Weinberger expressed U.S. government support, stating, "The U.S. attaches great importance to the maintenance by the United Kingdom Government of an independent nuclear deterrent."[111] This statement reflects the Department of Defense's realization of the military utility of allied nuclear forces. Malone says the existence of survivable, second strike forces in Great Britain and France has reduced Soviet incentives for conducting a first strike as well as diminishing the old American fear of premature British and French nuclear actions. Since Soviet strikes against Britain or France would inevitably invite retaliation, these national forces may be able to sanctuarize British and French territory and reduce Soviet warfighting flexibility (at least on the theater nuclear level). Especially in the case of Great Britain, this could be helpful due to the existence on British soil of numerous American and British reconnaissance assets, command, control and communications facilities, satellite monitoring stations and ocean surveillance systems.[112]

In May 1983, Lawrence Eagleburger, U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, expressed a similarly supportive position concerning the invalidity of the U.S. negotiating about British and French weapons.[113] President Reagan himself, in October 1985, responding to Gorbachev's offer to negotiate directly with France and the United Kingdom, said "Certainly the U.S. cannot negotiate with the Soviets about what they're going to do with regard to the nuclear missiles of other countries."[114]

However, since then, some public comments by members of the Reagan administration have made the allies wary of Washington's commitment. The Reagan administration, confronting the possibility of an INF agreement with the Soviet Union, in recent years has inadvertently provided fuel for Allied fears that the U.S. may withdraw support for the European nuclear forces.

Although this will not happen in an INF framework, Europeans fear that it could happen in the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks. When Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev met at Reykjavik in October 1986, President Reagan proposed to eliminate

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[111]Letter of Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger to Minister of Defence John Nott, *The British Strategic Nuclear Force*, Cmnd. 8517, HMSO, 1982, cited in Malone, *The British Nuclear Deterrent*, p. 156.

[112]Ibid., p. 179.

[113]Lawrence Eagleburger, "Why We Don't Count the French and British Missiles," *The Washington Post*, May 8, 1983, p. B8.

[114]President Reagan, quoted in "Russians Offer British, French Talks on Arms," *Richmond-Times Dispatch*, October 4, 1985, p. 1.

all ballistic missiles within ten years. This could have a profound impact on British and French nuclear forces for they are predominantly made up of ballistic missiles. Western Europeans argue that the survivability, penetration and destructive potential of ballistic missiles are vital to deter a Soviet conventional attack.

In July 1986 administration aides worked out a plan that contributed to the President's eventual Reykjavik proposal. It called for a 7 1/2 year period of adherence to the ABM Treaty. At the end of that time either country could deploy ballistic missile defenses. However, any country proposing such deployments would first have to propose a plan to provide for sharing the benefits of strategic defense and, to eliminate all ballistic missiles.[115] This plan, which was passed to British Prime Minister Thatcher for comment, also mentioned the possibility of eliminating French, British, and Chinese ballistic missiles. After Mrs. Thatcher expressed her concern over that aspect of the plan, it was omitted before being sent to Mr. Gorbachev.[116] West European fears concerning American constancy were not assuaged when Secretary of State George Shultz, commenting on President Reagan's proposal to abolish ballistic missiles said, "You would, if you agreed to a program like this, obviously, you would then have to go to the British and the French and the Chinese and persuade them to join you in ending these particular kinds of weapons. . . We and the Soviets aren't going to get rid of all of our ballistic missiles and leave some other countries with them."[117] However, even before Reykjavik, highly placed officials in the administration made statements which caused consternation among U.S. allies. On September 29, 1983, Vice President George Bush stated that somewhere along the line, British and French nuclear forces must be addressed.[118] Even Richard Perle, a vocal supporter of the American nuclear deterrent, stated that " . . . it would be difficult for any government to insist on retaining ballistic missiles if the United States and the Soviet Union were in the process of eliminating them."[119] The European anxiety is that the

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[115]Although at first glance it might appear unecessary to deploy BMD after the elimination of ballistic missiles, BMD could serve as a protective measure in case of non-compliance or a threat by a third country.

[116]Don Oberdorfer, "At Reykjavik, Soviets were Prepared and U.S. Improvised," *The Washington Post*, February 16, 1987, p. 1.

[117]"Shultz: You've Got to be Patient," *The Washington Post*, October 15, 1986, p. A24.

[118]Don Oberdorfer, "Bush Says Talks Cannot Ignore British Missiles," *The Washington Post*, September 29, 1983.

[119]Richard Perle, interview in *Defense Issues*, vol. 1, no. 70, October 1986.

British and French might be portrayed (as Perle's statment seems to imply), as obstacles to a possible arms accord, with political pressure then applied.[120]

B. CONSISTENCIES IN SOVIET POLICY OBJECTIVES

While U.S. policy concerning these European nuclear forces has not always been consistent, the Soviet Union has been quite constant in its policy objectives *vis-à-vis* the British and French deterrents. The Soviets have articulated an objective and pursued it with a singularity of purpose, although at times they have followed tactical "detours."

Defining that objective is complicated. On the surface it appears that it is merely to contain the proliferation of the British and French nuclear forces. That is one goal. The Soviets are concerned about French and British nuclear modernization programs and would like to stop them, but pursuing compensation for these forces is also a means to other ends. The Soviets have a focused set of objectives *vis-à-vis* NATO and the issue of British and French nuclear weapons is a useful tool to help achieve those objectives. Some of the aims are explicitly stated in Soviet literature and others can only be inferred from their actions. Three key goals in Soviet policy are:

(1) to make political use out of Warsaw Pact conventional superiority;

(2) to bring about the dissolution of NATO[121] and,

(3) to form an all-European security system dominated by the Soviet Union.

It would appear that the Soviets have both political and military reasons to emphasize the question of third country nuclear forces in pursuit of their objectives. First, it is an issue with enormous political implications for the North Atlantic Alliance; and NATO's failure to address the matter effectively could impair Alliance cohesion, leading to the Soviet realization of the goals mentioned above.[122] Second, militarily, these forces have a capability which worries Moscow. These forces are arrayed explicitly against the Soviet Union.

In a February 1981 interview with *Der Spiegel*, Soviet President Brezhnev likened the Soviet Union's position regarding INF and third country nuclear forces to the American response to the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba in the 1960's.[123] The

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[120]One might speculate that it was in part the same apprehensions which made West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl agree to the Soviet demand that German Pershing 1A's be removed as a condition for an INF agreement.

[121]Specifically articulated in Soviet literature, including Sobakin, *Equal Security*,

[122]Implications for the Alliance are discussed later in this chapter.

[123]Leonid Brezhnev interview with *Der Spiegel*, reprinted in *Survival*, vol. xxiv, no. 1, January/February 1982.

Soviet Union has many arguments, it feels justify compensation for British and French forces. One in particular, often cited by the Kremlin is a sort of "catch-all." The concept of "equal security" is the main Soviet rationale for considering third-country nuclear forces in arms control negotiations. This is a concept which the Soviets claim is an established principle in international law and one, moreover, which the United States has explicitly recognized several times. As early as 1961, according to Soviet literature, the United Nations General Assembly approved the Joint Soviet-American Statement on the Principles of Negotiations on Disarmament stating that arms control must be carried out in such a way that " . . . no state or group of states can gain a military advantage, and that security for all will be equally ensured."[124] On May 31, 1972 a Soviet-American communiqué announced the signature of the SALT I treaty and stated the intention of both parties to continue the SALT process " . . . in the spirit of good will, respect for the lawful interests of one another, and observance of the principle of equal security."[125] Moscow contends that following the concept of equal security, American-Soviet parity had been achieved and that President Carter, in June 1978, recognized such a balance, and his Secretary of Defense, Harold Brown, reiterated that view on April 5, 1979 saying, "Today a strategic balance exists."[126] To lend further credibility to the Soviet contention that prior to President Reagan's "military buildup" a strategic balance existed, V.K. Sobakin quotes French President Francois Mitterrand, on a June 10, 1983 television broadcast, and the prestigious International Institute for Strategic Studies. However, Sobakin gives no exact source for these claims. The Soviets assert that the Reagan administration has chosen to ignore both the legal principle of equal security and the state of parity which existed, seeking instead to achieve military superiority.

The Soviet concept of equal security is comparable to that of the "correlation of forces," in that it has a number of elements. Perhaps of primary importance is the principle that when a balance exists, it is crucial that there be no attempts to upset this balance. This balance, however, can be upset not only through achieving military superiority but by even attempting to achieve it. Another important aspect of the Soviet concept of equal security is that to achieve it, allowances must be made for certain qualitative differences between forces. The Soviets interpret this to mean that

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[124]V.K. Sobakin, *Equal Security*: *The Principle of Equality and Equal Security in Contemporary International Relations*, JPRS-TAC-85-001-L, 1985, p. 8.

[125]Ibid., p. 11.

[126]Ibid., p. 50.

at times:

> it will be necessary to back off in certain ways from strict numerical equality, in view of the fact that certain other factors not influencing U.S. security influence the security of the Soviet Union. One of these, and a very important one, is that there are other countries in the world which possess nuclear capabilities and are enemies of the USSR. The U.S. does not have such enemies.[127]

Unfortunately, these are words taken from a report by Charles Gellner for the Congressional Research Service which Sobakin has borrowed to support the idea that (according to the Soviet concept of equal security) NATO must pay the price in terms of its security for the fact that the Soviet Union has adversaries other than the United States. In other words what this says, is that the U.S.S.R. deserves to be compensated because it has behaved aggressively and made enemies who deem it prudent to have nuclear weapons capable of threatening the the Soviet Union, out of fear of further Soviet aggression. The Soviets contend (and Mr. Gellner's paper seems to support) that to uphold the principle of equal security, the Soviet Union is entitled to nuclear forces equal to those of the United States, Great Britain, France, China, and any other adversaries with a nuclear capability, combined. This notion should be kept in mind when examining the other arguments put forth by the Soviets in attempts to justify their demands for compensation by the U.S. for British and French nuclear forces, because inherent in each of these rationales is the idea that they undermine Soviet equal security.

Let us examine how the Soviets attempt to refute Western arguments for exclusion of British and French forces from U.S.-Soviet bilateral arms control negotiations. To the contention that British and French nuclear forces are small in comparison to either Soviet or American strategic forces, the Soviets reply with a quote from Great Britain's own statement on defense for 1980:

> The nuclear capability of Great Britain and France may seem modest in comparison with the arsenals of the superpowers. However, in absolute numbers the losses which can be inflicted are colossal.[128]

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[127]Charles Gellner, *British and French Nuclear Forces in the INF Negotiations*, Congressional Research Service, July 25, 1983, pp. 10-11.

[128]Great Britain, Secretary of State for Defence, *Defence in the 1980s, Statement on the Defence Estimates 1980*, vol 1, 1980, p. 12. The phrasing of the British source is not exactly the same as in Sobakin's book. It is not clear if the error was in the Russian translation from English or the English translation from Russian.

Both V.K. Sobakin and Leonid Brezhnev mistakenly state that the French are modernizing their SLBMs to a seven warhead capability. France's new M-4 SLBM has six reentry vehicles, not seven as Brezhnev and Sobakin assert.

Although it would seem clear, especially in the French case, that the forces France and Britain maintain are independent national deterrents and as such should not be subject to limitation within American-Soviet bilateral arms control negotiations, the Soviets do not agree. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher on September, 1983 referred to the British nuclear capability as a deterrent capability opposing the Soviet forces; and Francis Pym was quoted as saying, "Our deterrent forces are an integral part of NATO forces."[129] As for the independent nature of the French strategic nuclear forces, what leaders in the Kremlin find important is not the number of French commitments to allies, but rather the side on which their capability is found. The Soviets read a clear French commitment to NATO, not just in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, but more so in the Brussels Treaty which calls for "aid and assistance by all means."[130] Although the French publicly stress their independence and freedom of action, the Soviets accuse them of maintaining contradictory and illogical policies. The Soviets ask how France can claim to be a loyal ally but still stand aside in the case of a conflict?"[131] Sobakin argues that the "intentional indefiniteness and ambiguity on this question [of public nuclear doctrine versus alliance commitments] has an entirely definite and unambiguous purpose."[132] As further proof that the French take their alliance obligations seriously, the Soviets point to a statement by French Defense Minister Hernu in 1983 that "we are members of the alliance, and we obey all the rules of the Atlantic Alliance. We observe them."[133] The Soviet judgment as regards the autonomy of French and British nuclear policy was summed up best by Andrei Gromyko, when he said "Those missiles are part of the common forces of the North Atlantic alliance."[134] The Sobakin book claims however, that the Soviet Union has

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[129]*Le Monde* (Paris), March 17, 1983, cited in Sobakin, *Equal Security*, p. 56.

[130]North Atlantic Treaty, August 24, 1949, T.I.A.S. No. 1964, and Treaty on Economic and Cultural Matters and Collective Self-Defense, March 17, 1948, 19 U.N.T.S. 51(The Treaty of Brussels). Article IV of the Brussels Treaty says, "all the military and other aid and assistance in their power," and not "aid and assistance by all means," as asserted by Sobakin.

[131]*Le Monde* (Paris), January 26, 1983, cited in Yost, *Adelphi Papers*, p. 55.

[132]Sobakin, *Equal Security*, p. 57.

[133]Ibid., p. 56.

[134]Andrei Gromyko's press conference of April 2, 1983, *New York Times*, April 3,

never intended the British and French forces to be a subject of negotiations, but only to be counted as an existing quantity.

Although in the past the Soviet Union had recognized British and French nuclear weapons as "strategic," according to the Soviet definition, shortly after INF negotiations commenced they began to define British and French forces as long-range theater weapons.[135] To support the most recent stance that the missiles in question are theater nuclear weapons the Soviets again cite American sources to argue their case. That the French and British nuclear deterrents are "strategic" is an outright lie, according to some Soviet statements. As evidence, the Soviets cite a report from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee which, according to the Soviets, says, " . . . the Allied systems of Britain and France are theater of military operations systems, and the SALT-2 Agreement does not extend to them."[136] In addition they cite a June 1983 State Department report and the 1979 West German defense white paper as confirming this position.[137]

Finally, the Soviets state that within the Alliance itself, many groups recognize the legitimacy of the Soviet position on third-country nuclear weapons. Many of the social-democratic parties of Europe, including the SPD, support the Soviet stance. Although he provides no evidence to support this assertion, Sobakin contends that the parliaments of Holland and Denmark have made resolutions confirming their backing. The Soviets direct attention as well to Vice President George Bush's September 29, 1983 remark concerning the need to address the issue of British and French nuclear forces in arms control negotiations.

1983, p. 10.

[135]See discussion later in this chapter.

[136]Sobakin, *Equal Security*, p. 71. Because Sobakin did not give an exact citation, the author assumed he was referring either to the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *The SALT II Treaty, Hearings before the Committee on Foreign* Relations, 96th Cong., 1st sess., 1979, or the same committee's *The SALT II Treaty, Report of the Committee on Foreign Relations*, Exec. Rept. 96-14, 96th Cong., 1st sess., 1979. The only indication the author could find that the Senate considered British and French nuclear forces as theater forces was a discussion of such forces under a section entitled, "Theater Nuclear Forces," in the *SALT II Treaty, Report*, pp. 98-100.

[137]A review of the FRG's 1979 white paper revealed no statements which would confirm the Soviet contentions, and Sobakin's citation was not complete enough to permit location of the State Department report.

It appears the Soviets are not pursuing the issue of compensation strictly out of a desire to limit the British and French nuclear systems, but do in fact, have a more complex agenda. This section discusses the tactics Soviet negotiators have used over the years regarding the matter of compensation and reaches the conclusion the issue is a ploy to achieve other ends. Notwithstanding the feints in the Kremlin's moves, its long-term strategy has demonstrated remarkable continuity. One is tempted to say the Soviet position has been boringly predictable.

At a press conference on March 2, 1987, the Soviet Chief of Staff, Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, clarified Mr. Gorbachev's earlier proposal which de-linked agreement on INF to other Soviet-U.S. arms control negotiations. While confirming that Gorbachev's most recent proposal excludes the demand for compensation for British and French nuclear forces, Akhromeyev did say that there would come a time when Paris and London would have to enter the disarmament equation.[138] So apparently for now, the issue of British and French nuclear forces in *an INF context* has been "put to rest." Like so many times in the past, the Soviets have, for whatever reason, used British and French nuclear forces in the arms control "game." But, as in the past, they have left the issue open for future discussions.

Since the SALT I talks began in 1969 the issue has come and gone. While always an element of the debate in one way or another, British and French nuclear weapons have gone from being defined by the Soviets as "strategic" to "theater" and maybe now back to "strategic" again. The advantage of Moscow's strategy is that whether or not the British and French nuclear arsenals are defined as theater or strategic, the Soviets can still (in their opinion) demand compensation; and this they have done. When negotiations take place on strategic systems, the Soviets define British and French weapons as "strategic." When intermediate range force negotiations occur, the Soviets "realize" that the British and French forces are in fact, "theater" in nature. It is for them a "no lose" situation, especially if one speculates that they make these claims not simply because they really want to control these systems, but also because they are trying to divide the alliance.

SALT I placed limits on numbers of strategic ballistic missile launchers. The Soviets defined "strategic" as anything capable of striking the territory of either superpower. This would by its nature include British and French nuclear systems, while excluding Soviet weapons which could strike West European countries. In SALT

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[138]Christopher Walker, "Britain Could Keep Missiles in Soviet Deal," *The Times* (London), March 3, 1987, p. 1.

I the question of so-called American "forward-based systems" was of more concern to the Soviets than were British and French nuclear forces. What was of interest to the Soviets were American proposals to freeze SLBMs. Britain and France had programs for SLBMs and, since they would not be parties to a SALT I agreement, they would not be affected by a freeze and might increase their forces, or the United States might (the Soviets argued) "circumvent" the treaty by helping build up these forces.[139] Under limits established in the Interim Agreement, the United States could have no more than 710 ballistic missile launchers on submarines and no more than 44 modern SSBNs, while the Soviet Union was allowed up to 950 SLBMs on up to 62 modern SSBNs. The concept that the Soviets were being compensated for British and French SLBMs emerged in the unilateral "Statement of the Soviet Side," of May 17, 1972. In this statement the Soviet negotiator Semenov stated that during the period of effectiveness of the Interim Agreement, if the U.S. NATO allies increased the number of their modern SSBNs, the Soviet Union would *have the right* to a corresponding increase in their own SSBN force. He went on to say that the Soviet Union considered that the limits provided for in the Interim Agreement only partially compensated the Soviet Union for the strategic imbalance which existed.[140] While the United States denied the validity of this claim, the Soviets had set a precedent in demands they would continue to pursue in future negotiations.

In SALT II the question of compensation was discussed at length, with the Soviet Union explicitly making demands throughout the negotiations and the United States refusing to accept these demands. Given the context in which the Soviet claims were made, it would appear that the issue was used as a tactic by Soviet negotiators to achieve other concessions. Continuing with the policy articulated in reply to the Soviet Unilateral Statement, the United States refused to compensate the Soviets for the British and French nuclear weapons. Strobe Talbott contends the Soviets considered the eventual limits on heavy missiles to counterbalance the existence of British and French nuclear arsenals[141] The United States had placed great emphasis on limiting Soviet "heavy" missiles and throughout SALT II sought to achieve this goal. For a

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[139]Gerard Smith, *Doubletalk: The Story of SALT I, p. 145.*

[140]See National Academy of Sciences, *Nuclear Arms Control Background and Issues*, National Academy Press, pp. 282-287,

[141]According to Talbott, the Soviets were allowed to maintain their monopoly in heavy missiles and the Soviets contend that this was to compensate them for British and French forces. It is not clear, however, on what information Talbott bases this assertion, since he provides no sources. See, Talbott, *Deadly Gambits*, p. 219.

long time, American planners had perceived the Soviet SS-18 heavy missile to be the greatest threat to American ICBMs.[142] At the 1974 Vladivostok summit between Brezhnev and President Ford the Soviets agreed to drop the issue of FBS and allied systems as part of a larger compromise in which the U.S. made concessions on Soviet heavy missile cutbacks. This compromise however, did not make any compensations to the Soviets, as Henry Kissinger confirmed at a November 24, 1974 press conference.[143]

July 1980 signalled the beginning of a shift in Soviet tactics. First, they expressed themselves willing to exclude the question of British and French nuclear forces from initial SALT III negotiations. David Yost speculates the reason for this shift was an attempt to isolate American strategic systems in Europe, thus making them more negotiable.[144] But an even more drastic shift was to occur in November 1981, when Soviet-American negotiations began on intermediate range nuclear forces in Europe. The Soviets found "a tactical and opportunistic use of third country forces."[145] Whereas previously they had considered British and French nuclear forces to be strategic because they could strike Soviet territory, they now found it expedient to count them as being relevant to a theater nuclear balance.

Throughout the INF negotiations, the issue of compensation for third country forces has been particularly contentious. It is interesting to note, as David Adamson points out, that the question of these forces has become more salient over time. Whereas during SALT I and SALT II the Soviets could more easily afford to drop their insistence on counting these forces due to the fact that British and French forces at that time only made up a small fraction of the destructive potential of either of the superpowers, in the face of British and French modernization plans, the Soviets have felt it necessary to increase their rhetoric.[146] Another factor might have been Soviet attempts to capitalize on a certain public hysteria and greater fear of war which led to greater Western vulnerability on the issue.

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[142]American preoccupation with the SS-18 did not stop at SALT II, but was still present when the START talks began.

[143]Kissinger, Press conference, November 24, 1974, *Documents on Disarmament.*

[144]Yost, *Adelphi Papers*, no. 195, p. 59.

[145]Ibid., p. 59.

[146]David Adamson, "America's Nuclear Allies and Arms Control," *American Foreign Policy Newsletter*, vol. 7, no. 5, October 1984, p. 5.

It appears that for the most part the main Soviet effort during the negotiations prior to the initial 1983 deployments of U.S. Pershing IIs and ground-launched cruise missiles was to forestall those deployments, and British and French forces were "taken by the Soviets essentially as a given to be exploited as a device to forestall the American deployments."[147] Moscow's position was that with British and French nuclear forces, parity in long-range theater nuclear weapons already existed before the planned implementation of the NATO dual-track decision. It appears the Soviet hope was that if the West accepted a trade-off between SS-20's and British and French missiles there would be no American INF deployments.[148] Controlling British and French nuclear arsenals was an objective, given modernization plans, but it was secondary. In fact, some observers judge that Soviets do not care about reducing British and French nuclear systems as much as they prize other goals. The NATO Special Consultative Group itself said that when the USSR eventually dropped its explicit demand for compensation, "they were in effect confirming that concern over those forces was never a fundamental element of their INF approach."[149]

The Soviet proposal in the beginning weeks of the INF negotiations was that the USSR and NATO (meaning France, Great Britain and the U.S.) reduce medium-range missiles and aircraft in or "intended for use" in Europe to 300. The Soviets proposed to decrease by 255 the number of missiles and aircraft the U.S. would be permitted, to compensate for British and French nuclear forces.[150] In November 1981 Soviet President Brezhnev proposed a moratorium on deployment of medium-range missile systems of NATO and the USSR. On December 21, 1982 Yuri Andropov made what the Soviet Union described as a "fair" proposal. The USSR would only retain in Europe a number of medium range missiles equivalent to the number possessed by France and Great Britain (162 according to the Soviet count). This, according to the

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[147]Ibid., p. 5. Further evidence of the priority the Soviets gave to stopping INF is indicated in their START proposal to lower SALT II ceilings on strategic nuclear delivery vehicles, in exchange for an American agreement not to add any more so-called FBS (namely LRINF).

[148]Eric J. Grove, "Allied Nuclear Forces Complicate Negotiations," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist*, June-July 1986, p. 21.

[149]NATO Special Consultative Group, "INF: Progress Report to Ministers," NATO Information Service, 1983, cited in Yost, *Adelphi Papers, Part II*, p. 60.

[150]Yost, *Adelphi Papers*, p. 56.

Soviets, would result in hundreds of Soviet missiles, to include dozens of SS-20s, being removed from Europe. In addition, the Soviets would make further reductions in the future if Britain and France did likewise.

In May, 1983 Andropov made a new proposal, which did not appear much different from the December 1982 proposal. He proposed to count warheads rather than missiles. Under this method of counting, Moscow would deploy seventeen fewer SS-20s. The British and French had 434 total warheads. By deploying no more than the number deployed by France and Great Britain, the Kremlin would be limited to 435 warheads, or 145 three-warhead SS-20 missiles.

Soviet negotiating offers continued in this vein until November 1983, when they appeared to drop the explicit demand for compensation. Paul Nitze reported that Soviet negotiator Kvitsinsky privately proposed that the U.S. make an offer to reduce warheads by 572 on each side, in return for which the Soviet Union would drop the compensation issue until a later time. The Soviets walked out of INF in November 1983 but have continued to deny they dropped their compensation demands, providing versions of the negotiations which assert that the U.S. was willing to concede on the issue.[151]

In October 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev made what could be described as a masterful propaganda move, indicating that in order to find a solution to the "problem" of increasing British and French nuclear potential, he was prepared to negotiate directly with these countries. There have been numerous theories as to why Gorbachev made such a drastic departure from the tactics of the Brezhnev regime. Among the most plausible:

- the possibility of a separate agreement with the allies on theater nuclear weapons would highlight the intransigence of the United States. This could either lead to other agreements, or weaken the alliance;
- as an effort to call attention to differences within the Alliance and split it;
- as an effort to appeal to anti-American sentiment; and,
- because Gorbachev really wants détente and arms control.[152]

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[151]Kvitsinsky, "Soviet View of Geneva."

[152]For opinions of various Soviet specialists, see Jonathan Haslam's article, "Forces Will End Arms-Control Stalemate," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 November 1985, p. 7, and Richard Higgins', "Soviet Specialists Look at Gorbachev's Tactics," *The Boston Globe*, October 6, 1985, p. 26.

Still further indications of Soviet changes in tactics came in Gorbachev's January 15, 1986 proposal calling for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons worldwide. In this proposal British and French weapons were again described as "strategic," but Gorbachev called on France and the United Kingdom to freeze them in conjunction with a proposed fifty percent cut in superpower strategic arsenals. According to Eric Grove, although Gorbachev accepted the definition of British and French systems as strategic, he also linked an INF agreement to a British and French pledge not to modernize their forces.[153] An important element in his January 15 proposal is that a French British nuclear freeze would take place starting in 1990, about the time modernization plans for both countries "take off." As a propaganda ploy targeting anti-nuclear publics the Soviets could expect it to be well received as "proof" of their peaceful aims, but if accepted, it would have in fact stopped strategic force modernization in those countries. By once again re-defining the category in which to place French and British forces, it would seem that Gorbachev was laying the groundwork for an INF agreement, while at the same time making the subtle point that they were not excluded from future arms control fora. And in fact, since Reykjavik and his February 28, 1987 arms control proposal, that is precisely the Soviet position.

Before Reykjavik the Soviets had given indications that an agreement on long-range intermediate nuclear missiles could be concluded without settling the issue of strategic force limits and space and defensive systems. After the collapse of talks at Reykjavik, however, spokesmen said that this was not possible, without maintaining the same conditions they had previously demanded as well. Namely, British and French nuclear forces counted in American totals, no reductions in Soviet intermediate range nuclear forces in Asia, and no ceilings on Soviet shorter-range INF missiles.[154] On Feburary 28, 1987 Gorbachev publicly agreed to negotiate an INF agreement "without delay" and without linking it to any of the unresolved issues of strategic offensive and defensive systems. When Akhromeyev indicated that this also meant dropping demands for compensation for British and French nuclear weapons in INF, the transition appeared complete. The Soviets appear to have come full circle and for the foreseeable future, these forces will be handled in the context of "strategic" negotiations.

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[153]Grove, "Allied Nuclear Forces, " pp. 1 and 22.

[154]For a review of the Reykjavik summit, see David S. Yost, "The Reykjavik Summit and European Security," *SAIS Review*, vol. 7, no. 2, Summer-Fall 1987.

Although sometimes the issue of British and French nuclear arsenals has been more important than at others, it has always been present in U.S.-Soviet bilateral arms control negotiations. It seems clear that often the issue has been used by the Soviets as a "public relations" gimmick to achieve particular political effects. The Soviet Union has been able to profit from the openness of Western society--turning up the rhetoric as necessary to play on NATO domestic audiences. Just because it sometimes appears that the Soviets are more interested in this issue for its value as a political "wedge" to drive between Alliance members, than for its military consequences, does not make the issue any less important. As the next section explains, the implications for Alliance cohesion and security resulting from the Soviet use of their compensation claims are considerable.

C. IMPLICATIONS FOR ALLIANCE COHESION AND SECURITY

The Soviet demands regarding the British and French nuclear arsenals raises questions that the Western alliance will have to address at some point in the future. Whether or not France and Great Britain decide to negotiate some kind of limits on these weapons, the issue probably will again be raised by the U.S.S.R it is essential for NATO cohesion and security that it be resolved in some fashion. This section examines some of the implications of this problem for the Alliance.

In examining how the "compensation" question disturbs Alliance cohesion, one must understand that this is exactly what the Soviet Union is trying to do. The existence of allied independent nuclear arsenals has not been a source of contention within the Alliance since the late 1960s. In the 1974 Ottawa Declaration the United States (along with the rest of the Alliance) recognized the valuable contribution French and British nuclear capabilities can make to NATO. Although the U.S. recognizes and supports the independence of British and French central nuclear systems, the existence of two alternate decision-making centers adds to the overall deterrent effect against aggression targeted at NATO countries.

The Soviets have attempted to make these weapons a "problem." By attempting to focus on Alliance discord and by trying to "decouple" European security from American strategic systems, Moscow has strived to create a problem where none exists. During negotiations, Soviets have often tabled proposals which implied that there are distinctions between the threats against the U.S. and Europe. According to the Soviets' definition, only weapons capable of hitting a superpower's territory are

"strategic." This fosters an impression that the defense of European territory is separate than that of American territory.

In INF the question of British and French nuclear forces was raised to try to stop the deployment of American Pershing IIs and ground-launched cruise missiles. By equating SS-20's with British and French nuclear weapons, the Kremlin encouraged a concept of "Eurostrategic" weapons which again, might tend to decouple Europe from the United States. NATO acceptance of equal numbers of Soviet medium-range missiles to British and French missiles would have made deployment of American intermediate range weapons seem unnecessary.

The deployment in Europe of American Pershing IIs and ground-launched cruise missiles was to be a symbol of the American commitment to European defense. From a strictly military point of view, the Soviets wanted to halt deployment. By blocking that symbol of American commitment however, Moscow could politically "decouple" the U.S. and its West European allies. Stopping the American deployment of medium-range missiles could put the American commitment in doubt, moving the Soviets one step closer to their goal of splitting the Alliance. One posible way of stopping American INF deployments was to raise the question of British and French nuclear forces. By bringing up "compensation" the Soviets might succeed in keeping American intermediate-range nuclear forces out of Europe; and if not, they could at least disrupt Alliance unity.

Although the Soviet Union and the United States have been arguing the point since 1969, it is really only since the initial round of negotiations on long-range theater nuclear forces began in 1980 that the discussions surrounding the question of compensation for British and French nuclear weapons have been relatively intense. For seven years the superpowers have been debating the issue, and the impact this has had on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is noteworthy. Both the cohesion and the security of the Alliance could be affected by this issue in the long-term, depending on how the issues are handled.

The debate has increased tensions that were already present in intra-Alliance relations. Recent years have seen some calls in the U.S. for reductions in the U.S. troop presence in Europe as an answer to what is seen as European "free-riding;" American criticisms of European governments as unwilling to take action against international terrorists or their initial reluctance to protect their interests in the Persian Gulf; and American perceptions that European countries are damaging trade through

"protectionist" and unfair market practices. The Europeans in turn have expressed concern over what they perceive as American contentiousness. American actions against Libya, Europeans feared, would result in retaliation against targets in Europe. At first they criticised American actions to protect shipping in the Persian Gulf as not within the purview of NATO, and some European opinion leaders have portrayed the United States as an obstacle to nuclear disarmament.

Since SALT II many Europeans have doubted the American commitment to West European security. NATO's "dual-track" decsion of 1979 was an attempt to calm European fears of being "decoupled" from the American strategic nuclear guarantee. The prospect of the upcoming INF agreement between the USSR and the United States has reawakened the fear of decoupling. Some Europeans now worry that not only will they be decoupled from the U.S., but that the U.S. might negotiate an agreement with the Soviet Union which might undermine European security. In France especially, there is a feeling among members of the defense community that with the withdrawal of American INF in Europe, the independent nuclear arsenals of Great Britain and France will be even more necessary to deter a possible Soviet conventional attack. Therefore, public statements by American leaders, like those discussed previously tend to heighten European doubts.

There are several instances in the history of this debate when Soviet proposals and statements have evidently been made with the intention of driving the wedge of doubt farther into Alliance relations. Luckily, they have not always been successful.[155]

Domestically, on both sides of the Atlantic every proposal the Soviet Union has made which *appears* to be a concession on the issue causes certain interest groups in Europe to make more unmistakable their demands for an arms control agreement. Gorbachev's January 1986 plan for global disarmament held wide appeal for publics fearful of nuclear war. Allied governments could not very well say they were against disarmament. They were in a trap wherein they had the choice of either renouncing nuclear weapons and being confronted with Soviet conventional superiority or "admitting" to domestic audiences that they believed credible deterrence depends on the threat of nuclear reprisal. Neither was a cost-free choice.

It seems unlikely that the British or the French believe the U.S. might agree either tacitly or explicitly to limit their nuclear forces in a U.S.-Soviet bilateral arms control negotiation. It is absurd to think any American president would infringe on an

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[155]See Chapter III and Chapter IV, for discussions of Soviet proposals aimed at splitting the Alliance.

ally's sovereign rights in such a manner. The European fear is probably that the United States might apply political pressure to come to some kind of agreement limiting their nuclear arsenals. There is already much pressure domestically, at least in the United Kingdom, and it might difficult for British leaders to resist both domestic and American pressures.

The Reykjavik summit might have magnified Alliance differences as the British and the French expressed doubts concerning President Reagan's proposal to eliminate ballistic missiles within ten years. The elimination of American and Soviet ballistic missiles would have put enormous politicial pressure on Great Britain and France to eliminate theirs as well. Although Gorbachev temporarily suspended his demand that British and French nuclear forces be counted in American intermediate-range missile ceilings, he has held the demand in reserve for future occasions.

Anything that lessens Alliance cohesion impacts on security as well by threatening the possibility of a coordinated response to aggression. Other considerations, however, could jeopardize its security more directly. If, for example, the United States applied political pressure on France or Great Britain to limit their nuclear forces, the credibility of these nuclear forces could be threatened. Some might contend that this is irrelevant because of the American nuclear guarantee; but in a hypothetical future environment where the American guarantee has been "decoupled" or where American ballistic missiles might have been eliminated, or where medium-range missiles are no longer deployed in Europe and our allies are confronting a superior Soviet conventional force, the added credibility of a national deterrent could be critical.

There is also a concern among some allies that Great Britain and France are building up their nuclear forces at the expense of their conventional forces. The alliance cannot depend solely on nuclear deterrence. The NATO doctrine of "flexible response" can only work if the Alliance has a variety of options with which to respond to aggression. It will not be effective if the Alliance is forced to escalate immediately to nuclear weapons.

If NATO cannot rely completely on its nuclear forces, neither can it rely solely on its conventional ones. A superpower agreement based on elements such as those proposed at Reykjavik might force us to rely excessively on these forces--forces which are sadly in need of improvement.

Although there are practical military implications to the question of British and French nuclear weapons and arms control, the debate has had a greater impact on Alliance cohesion. To avoid the possibility of more serious intra-Alliance disagreements NATO must address the question, decide a course of action, and present a united front to Moscow.

V. CONCLUSION

In December 1987 the United States and the Soviet Union signed an agreement to eliminate all their ground-based intermediate range (500 to 5,500 km) missile forces. This agreement does not address British and French nuclear weapons. Since 1969 the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. have negotiated four treaties on nuclear delivery systems, two on strategic nuclear forces, one on intermediate range nuclear forces, and one on ABM. None of these four have included limits on the nuclear weapons of third parties. According to the Soviets, these forces--particularly those of Britain and France--will have to be a part of the "disarmament equation" in the future; and, as we have seen, some U.S. government officials appear to encourage conceptions that could lead to pressures on these forces.[156] In light of this, what conclusions can be reached as to the "bottom line" of this debate; what tentative judgments can be made as to the future?

First, it would appear that the United States' negotiating position has been vindicated. The Soviets and others have often portrayed the British and French nuclear arsenals as serious obstacles to U.S.-Soviet offensive arms control agreements since SALT I. Yet the history of these negotiations demonstrates that these allied nuclear forces have not been a bar to such agreements.

From the beginning the U.S. realized there were obvious reasons for not including British and French forces in U.S. totals, either in INF or START. These were:

(1) The Soviets were asking the U.S. to give up all future rights to deploy intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe while giving the Soviets the right to equate their SS-20s with British and French forces. In the SALT record there has never been a mutually agreed precedent to count third-party forces.

(2) Obviously Britain and France as sovereign nations refused to let their forces be counted in a U.S.-Soviet bilateral negotiation.

(3) The U.S. has no operational release authority over British and French nuclear weapons and no control over them.

(4) British and French nuclear weapons are "central" and thus intended only as an ultimate deterrent against a Soviet attack on either Great Britain or France.

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[156]See Chapter IV, for a discussion of comments about the U.S. proposals for the global elimination of ballistic missiles made in October 1986.

(5) Soviet proposals to equate British and French missiles with SS-20s (in or intended for use in Europe) did not reflect parity because some kinds of Soviet delivery vehicles (such as medium-range aircraft) were excluded.

(6) Soviet proposals clearly demonstrated Moscow's interest in negotiating a new structure of European security dominated by the Soviets.

(7) British and French forces are not, nor have they ever been claimed to be a substitute for the guarantee provided by American nuclear forces.

(8) An acceptance of the Soviet concept of "equal security" would compensate the Soviets because they have been aggressive and made enemies as well as giving them nuclear forces equal to those of the U.S., France, the U.K., and China combined.

(9) The issue of British and French forces was a Soviet attempt to divert attention from the Soviet build-up.

(10) Soviet demands regarding these forces were merely tactics to stop the U.S. INF deployments.[157]

It appears that compensation for British and French nuclear weapons has not been a key objective for Soviet negotiators since they dropped the issue in each instance. Not only did the NATO Special Consultative Group express this opinion in its *Progress Report to Ministers*, but others as well have argued that the Soviet actions have not reflected particularly strong concern with the French and British nuclear systems.[158] John Van Oudenaren points out that the Kremlin's failure to exert much pressure on London and Paris indicates that Soviet leaders were less concerned with our allies' nuclear capabilities than with halting U.S. defense efforts.[159] The omission of "compensation" from the "walk in the woods" formulation, and Kvitsinsky's November 1983 initiative were " . . . not the moves of negotiators who deem an issue fundamental to security or the *sine qua non* of any settlement."[160]

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[157]Yost, *Adelphi Papers, Part II*, pp. 57-59.

[158]NATO Special Consultative Group, *INF: Progress Report to Ministers*, 1983, cited in Yost, *Adelphi Papers, p. 60.*

[159]John Van Oudenaren, *Soviet Policy Toward Western Europe*, Rand Corporation, 1986, p. 53.

[160]Leon Sigal, *Nuclear Forces in Europe*, The Brookings Institution, 1984, p. 150.

If limiting British and French nuclear weapons was not the key objective, why did the Soviets raise the question? One reason, as already discussed, was as an argument to stop the American INF deployments and thus cast doubt on the American commitment to European security. If the INF agreement is ratified and enters into force, the Soviets will have effectively eliminated the U.S. INF deployment, but only time will tell if they have managed to accomplish the second part of their objective.

Second, Moscow appears to have used the British-French forces issue as a bargaining chip. In SALT I the Soviets insinuated that they considered the higher ceilings on SLBMs as their "compensation," but this statement was emphatically rejected by the the U.S. government. In SALT II, although the Soviet demands about British and French nuclear forces were dropped as part of a larger compromise package in which the Soviets were able to maintain their monopoly on "heavy" missiles, Talbott raises the possibility that the Soviets felt themselves to have been compensated.[161] Consequently, there are reasons to believe the Soviets have used the question of third-country nuclear forces as a bargaining chip. Although "compensation" is an obviously unreasonable demand, the Soviets get credit when they appear broad-minded and generous, by conceding on what is an intrinsically absurd demand.

In light of Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev's March 1987 statement concerning the future role of Paris and London in arms control negotiations, it is safe to predict that the issue will be part of a future scenario. It is not certain how that scenario may unfold. The British and French conditions for participation in arms control negotiations basically are:

- drastic reductions in superpower strategic arsenals,
- limitations on ballistic missile defenses, anti-submarine warfare, and ASAT,
- the reduction of asymmetries between Soviet and NATO conventional forces,
- and elimination of chemical and biological weapons (these last two being of special concern to the French).

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[161]Talbott, *Deadly Gambits*, p. 219.

Given these French and British government conditions for participation in nuclear arms ceilings regimes, their support for the INF deployments, their concerns with Soviet ballistic missile defenses, and their desire for U.S. "coupling" to Western Europe, it seems unlikely that either the United Kingdom or France would agree to participate in a multilateral arms control negotiation unless those conditions were met.

The stance of the American government in future negotiations involving British and French nuclear forces seems fairly clear. Its position in past arms control negotiations has been steadfast--i.e., the U.S. will not negotiate about its allies' nuclear weapons in Soviet-American negotiations. This is not likely to change. What appears less definite is the American position regarding British and French participation in arms control negotiations. Some in Paris and London may interpret recent public statements by U.S. officials to signify little support for British and French participation on their stated terms. Nonetheless, an American government must recognize the risks involved in the Soviet invitations to put pressure on Britain and France regarding their nuclear forces. Should a U.S. government place more weight on satisfying the Soviets--i.e., making an arms control agreement on Soviet terms--or on British and French national security interests and Alliance cohesion? The U.S. President has to consider interests of NATO as a whole.

If one judges by past Soviet behavior, even in future negotiations the aim of limiting British and French nuclear weapons will not be of primary importance and the Western countries can respond accordingly. Yet the past might not be the only guide because new circumstances may affect how the Soviets will respond in the future. There has been speculation that Mikhail Gorbachev has only temporarily conceded the question of British and French nuclear weapons because he now needs an arms control agreement to help him consolidate power. It is generally agreed among Sovietologists that one purpose of an INF agreement might be to "buy time" for the Soviet Union to devote attention to its ailing economy instead of its military.

All of these factors could affect how the Soviets handle the issue of British and French nuclear weapons in the future. If Gorbachev's power is eventually consolidated--if he has gained the time he needed and the economy has recovered--the Soviets may feel they no longer "need" an arms control agreement. They might then surprise the West and stand firm on this "problem" they have artificially created.

Because it is difficult to predict the scenario for future arms control negotiations, the Alliance must prepare itself to meet as many contingencies as possible. As stressed

in the preceding chapter, the U.S. and its allies need to present a consensus position in negotiations. Effective consultation with London and Paris concerning their future role in multilateral arms control negotiations seems fundamental to future U.S.-Soviet strategic nuclear agreements. Arms control agreements must not be pursued as an end in themselves, but rather a means to an end--that of European and American security. Unreasonable demands such as the Soviet insistence on "compensation" must not be met.

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